

FEMINIST FABLES FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

THE
F WORD
PROJECT

MAUREEN BURDOCK

FOREWORD BY TRINA ROBBINS

BURDOCK, MAUREEN

B8981fe

WITHDRAWN

ike(c)
Graphic
Novel

Feminist Fables for the
Twenty-First Century

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

The person charging this material is responsible for its renewal or return to the library on or before the due date. The minimum fee for a lost item is **\$125.00, \$300.00** for bound journals.

Theft, mutilation, and underlining of books are reasons for disciplinary action and may result in dismissal from the University. *Please note: self-stick notes may result in torn pages and lift some inks.*

Renew via the Telephone Center at 217-333-8400, 866-262-1510 (toll-free) or circlib@illinois.edu.

Renew online by choosing the **My Library Account** option at: <http://www.library.illinois.edu/catalog/>

1/15/16

MAR 05 2019

11/2015

Feminist Fables for the Twenty-First Century

The F Word Project

MAUREEN BURDOCK

Foreword by Trina Robbins



McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers
Jefferson, North Carolina

Each tale was written and illustrated by
Maureen Burdock except for "Halima's Story,"
which was written by Halima Mohammed Abdel Rahman.

Additional Credits, by Story

Marta & the Missing

Gabriel de Pablo: Spanish translation / Francisco Arce: Introduction

Mona & the Little Smile

Sarah Lightman: Introduction

Maisa & the Most Daring Muslim Women

Halima Mohammed Abdel Rahman: Arabic translation / Rubina Cohen: Introduction

Mumbi & the Long Run

David Opiyo: Swahili translation / Helen Concannon: Introduction /

Norah Sirma and Ester Korir: Afterword

Halima's Story

Written by Halima Mohammed Abdel Rahman

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGUING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA

Feminist fables for the twenty-first century : the F Word Project / Maureen Burdock.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-7864-7423-3 (softcover : acid free paper) (∞)

ISBN 978-1-4766-1294-2 (ebook)

1. Feminists—Comic books, strips, etc. 2. Feminism—Comic books, strips, etc.
3. Violence against women—Prevention—Comic books, strips, etc. 4. Child abuse—
Prevention—Comic books, strips, etc. 5. Women heroes—Comic books, strips, etc.
6. Graphic novels. I. Burdock, Maureen, 1970– artist, compiler. II. Robbins, Trina,
writer of foreword. III. Lightman, Sarah, 1975– writer of introduction. IV. De Pablo,
Gabriel, translator. V. Arce, Francisco, writer of introduction. VI. Rahman, Halima
Mohammed Sbdel, translator, author. VII. Cohen, Rubina, writer of introduction.
VIII. Opiyo, David, translator. IX. Concannon, Helen, writer of introduction.
X. Sirma, Norah, writer of afterword. XI. Korir, Ester,
writer of afterword. XII. Title: F Word Project.

PN6720.F46 2015

741.5'9—dc23

2015018552

BRITISH LIBRARY CATALOGUING DATA ARE AVAILABLE

© 2015 Maureen Burdock. All rights reserved

*No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form
or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying
or recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system,
without permission in writing from the publisher.*

Cover illustrations by Maureen Burdock

Printed in the United States of America



McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers
Box 611, Jefferson, North Carolina 28640
www.mcfarlandpub.com

To those feminists who come after me
and courageously continue the work, and
with gratitude to all those who came before.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to the many folks who have supported and encouraged this project since its conception. I especially want to acknowledge 656 Comics and Palabras de Arena in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. You are the ones who inspired me to start this project, and the example you set as passionate, humanist, feminist men and women has affected all of the fables in this collection.

Thank you to my translators: Gabriel de Pablo (Marta & the Missing), Halima Mohammed Abdel Rahman (Maisa & the Most Daring Muslim Women), and David Opiyo Ossome (Mumbi & the Long Run). Thanks also to my mother, Ingrid Claussner, for editing my translation of Mona & the Little Smile.

Thanks to Judy Chicago for encouraging me to complete this series of feminist fables and to the galleries and gallerists who have shown this work.

Rubina Cohen, thank you for sharing your stories with me, which found their way into Maisa & the Most Daring Muslim Women.

Many thanks to Jon Woo and the athletes of Camp Marafiki in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Not only did running with you make Mumbi and her comrades come alive in the fourth fable, but the experience gave me a deeper understanding of the meaning of community across cultures based on shared passion.

Thanks to Helen Concannon and the Friends of Londiani for sharing your knowledge with me, and to Sally Blakemore for your encouragement and for sharing your resources about FGM/C.

Halima Mohammed Abdel Rahman, your honest and open correspondences with me over the last few years have moved me deeply and made me realize the importance of finishing this project. You are truly a sister.

Contents

Acknowledgments

vi

Author's Note

ix

Oh, that F Word! A Foreword by Trina Robbins

xi

Marta & the Missing

Marta y Las Desaparecidas

1

Mona & the Little Smile

Mona & Das Leise Lächeln

33

Maisa & the Most Daring Muslim Women

ميساء والنساء المسلمات الأكثر جرأة

61

Mumbi & the Long Run

Mumbi Na Mbiyo Za Masafa Marefu

95

Halima's Story

125



Author's Note

Feminism isn't dead. It can't be, because too many of us feminists are very much alive and working hard for gender equality. I created this series of feminist fables to exhibit how different forms of violence against women's bodies in distinct cultures around the world are linked. NO forms of gender-based violence should be condoned. I hope that this collection gives courage to individual women, and that it will be used as a tool to create feminist solidarity.

Feminism is a struggle for gender equality that has been carried out over centuries and across cultures. It is a struggle for a partnership-based society that is radically different from the binaristic Judeo-Christian-Islamic mythos of master-servant/shepherd-sheep/Lord-disciple/etc. relationships. We will no longer need feminism when:

- 1) We stop feminizing or masculinizing human characteristics.
- 2) There is no more bride burning, female genital mutilation, rape, honor killing, gay-bashing, or any other form of violence, physical or psychological, committed towards people because they display certain gender characteristics or because they refuse or fail to display "correct" gender markers.
- 3) Women earn the same as men.
- 4) The first thing said upon getting an ultrasound or giving birth is not "It's a girl" or "It's a boy."
- 5) And here's the real litmus test: When men—even those in positions of power—can feel free to wear dresses and skirts in public without being ridiculed.

Oh, that F Word!

A Foreword by Trina Robbins

These are very exciting times for women cartoonists. There are more women drawing comics today than ever before, and what they are drawing are graphic novels featuring real and fictional stories, sometimes funny, sometimes sad, sometimes scary, and very often empowering.

But many people still think comics are only about superheroes. And many people know only one kind of superhero: the muscular man in his cape and brightly colored costume; stern, angry, using his fists of steel to fight criminals, super-villains, monsters from outer space. In *Feminist Fables for the Twenty-First Century* Maureen Burdock introduces us to a different kind of superhero, and first of all, she's a girl. She doesn't wear capes, but sometimes, like marathon runner Mumbi in "Mumbi & the Long Run," she can fly. Sometimes, like Marta, the karate instructor in "Marta & the Missing," she even has fists of steel. Sometimes her superpowers lie in the magic of her art, always in her hard work, her determination, and her strong sense of justice. And in case you didn't get that they are superheroes, Mona, in "Mona & the Little Smile," even wears Wonder Woman underoos and ties around her head a starry scarf like Wonder Woman's tiara. And instead of monsters from outer space, what these brave girls fight are real evils: femicide, rape, incest, genital mutilation, domestic violence, so-called "honor killings."

With some very beautiful and some very frightening images, Maureen Burdock introduces us to female superheroes from countries all over the world. Most of these heroines are fictional though their stories are based on reality, but "Halima's Story" is true and documents the advocacy of a very real-life heroine. Their stories are told in English, and in the language of their own people.

A word about Maureen Burdock's art: sometimes it takes on the look of the folk art of the country she's writing about. This is especially true in "Maisa & the Most Daring Muslim Women," where she draws Maisa riding on the mythical bird-creature, the Simurgh, or where she shows us Maisa in her coffin underground, surrounded by strange godlike monster faces. My favorite art is in "Mumbi & the Long Run." I like the way Maureen conveys the freedom that Mumbi feels as she runs, almost flying like the superhero she is.

Maureen is somewhat of a superhero herself. She founded the San Francisco branch of Laydeez Do Comics, an international group of women cartoonists and woman-friendly men who meet in London, Chicago, and San Francisco to share ideas and to support each other's work. And if you think Laydeez Do Comics is a good idea, and that you could use a group like that, of women cartoonists meeting for idea sharing and support, in your own home town of Philly, St. Paul, Indianapolis, Denver, then take a page from Maureen's book and just DIY. To paraphrase Arlo Guthrie in "Alice's Restaurant," if three people do it, folks may think it's an organization, but if fifty people do it, folks may think it's a MOVEMENT. Let's start a movement!

A Foreword by Trina Robbins

So what is this F word, and why does it inspire hope in the hearts and minds of some and fear in the hearts of others? And what is there to be afraid of, anyway? Sure, the F word stands for Feminism, but for so much more. It stands for Fantastic, Formidable, Fabulous, and Feisty. It stands for Fierce, Fiery, Fervent, and Forceful. And it stands for Freedom, Fairness, Friendship, and the Future.

Award-winning herstorian and writer Trina Robbins has been writing books, comics, and graphic novels for more than 40 years. Her 2009 book, *The Brinkley Girls: The Best of Nell Brinkley's Cartoons from 1913–1940* (Fantagraphics), and her 2011 book, *Tarpe Mills and Miss Fury*, were nominated for Eisner awards and Harvey awards. Her all-ages graphic novel, *Chicagoland Detective Agency: The Drained Brains Caper*, first in a 6-book series, was a Junior Library Guild Selection. Her graphic novel, *Lily Renee: Escape Artist*, was awarded a gold medal from Moonbeam Children's Books and a silver medal from Sydney Taylor Jewish Library Awards. Her most recent book is *Pretty in Ink*, a definitive history of women cartoonists. In 2013, Trina was voted into the Will Eisner Comic Book Hall of Fame.

Marta & the Missing

Marta y Las Desaparecidas



Spanish Translation by Gabriel de Pablo



Introduction

In this desert city so eager for water and letters, so distant from everything yet so close to death, Ciudad Juarez is plagued by social problems. It is difficult to take a subject that is so debilitating to the soul of a Juarense as the femicides and leave us with a message of hope, but *Marta & the Missing* accomplishes that and more. I would like to give thanks to Maureen for taking the time and dedication to create this great graphic narrative, for it is a great example of commitment for women's rights and for a life without violence. Two strong women filled with convictions like Marta and Maureen really set examples to follow.

—Francisco Arce, director of Mecenaz Galeria Studio
and writer of 656 Comics, Ciudad Juarez, Mexico

This story is dedicated, with deep feeling and respect, to all of those women lost and those who lost them. May this story inspire all those who stand together to stop violence against women around the world.

Dedico este libro, con sentimiento y profundo respeto, a todas esas mujeres desaparecidas y a sus familias. Ojalá esta historia sirva de inspiración a todas aquellas personas que luchan para frenar la violencia contra las mujeres en el mundo.

The women and girls in this story are modeled after actual women who were murdered in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico.

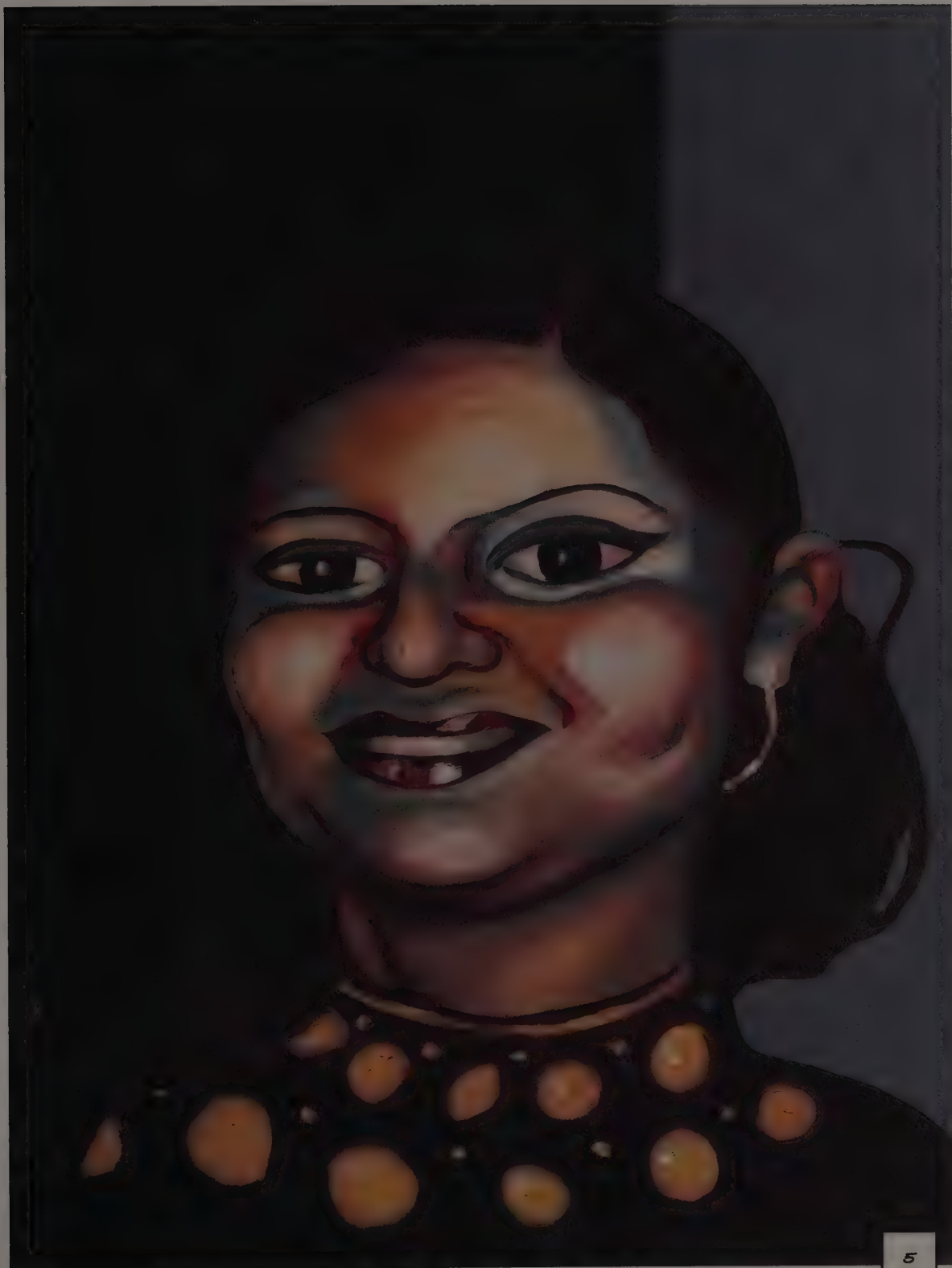
Los dibujos que aparecen en este libro fueron sacados de fotografías de mujeres y niñas reales que fueron asesinadas en Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, México.

Alma Margarita

Gloria

Hilda Johana

Edith







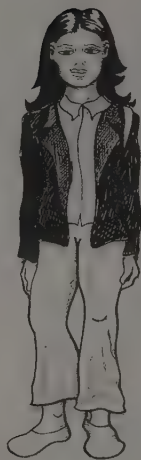


To be completely honest, I've never been to Mexico.
Para ser completamente honesta, nunca he estado en México.



But I met Marta, a woman from Juarez. I'll tell you how I met her later on. I don't remember what she does during the day. She might be a teacher, a maquilladora or a hair dresser.

Un día conocí a Marta, una mujer de Cd. Juarez. No recuerdo a qué se dedica Marta durante el día. Tal vez sea maestra, maquilladora o a lo mejor estilista. Pero por las tardes, ella hace lo que realmente le apasiona, ¡Ser instructora de Karate!

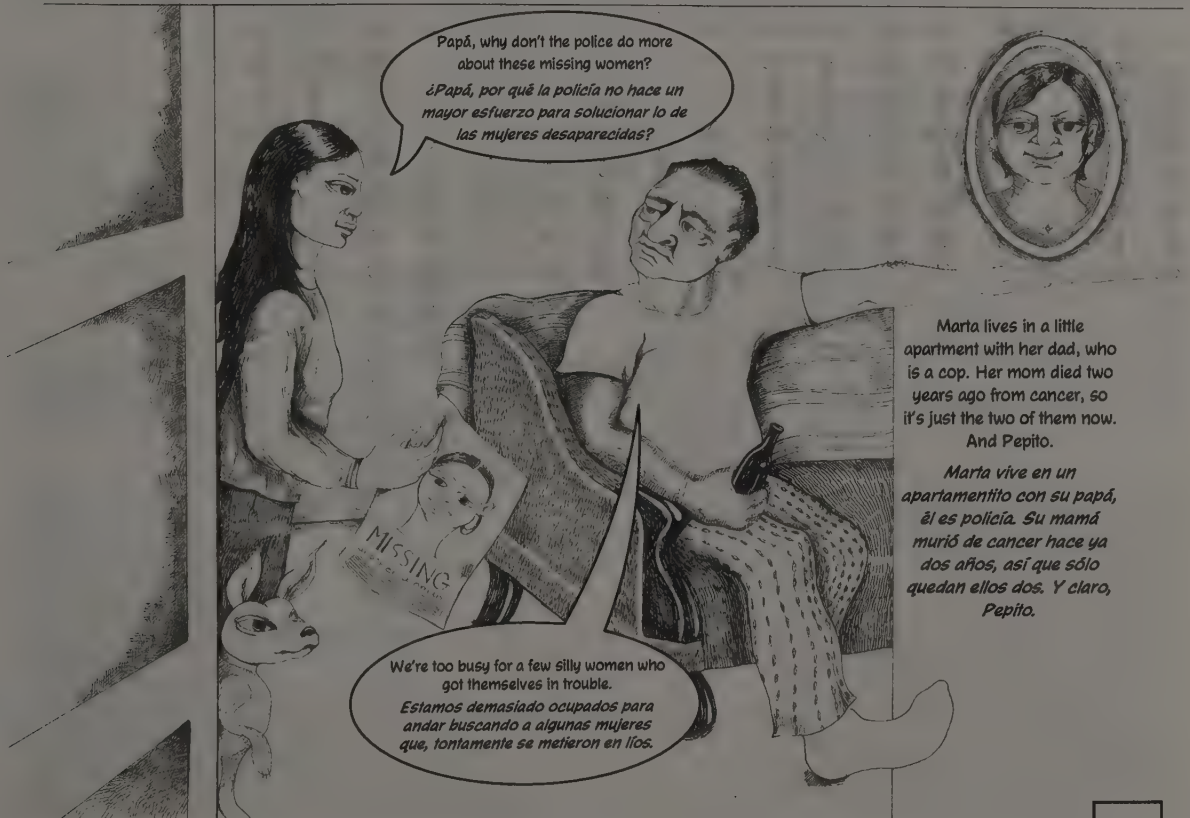


In the evenings Marta really comes alive as a Karate instructor.
Pero, mejor les cuento más adelante como la conocí.



After class, she walks home through the streets of the city with Pepito, her sidekick.

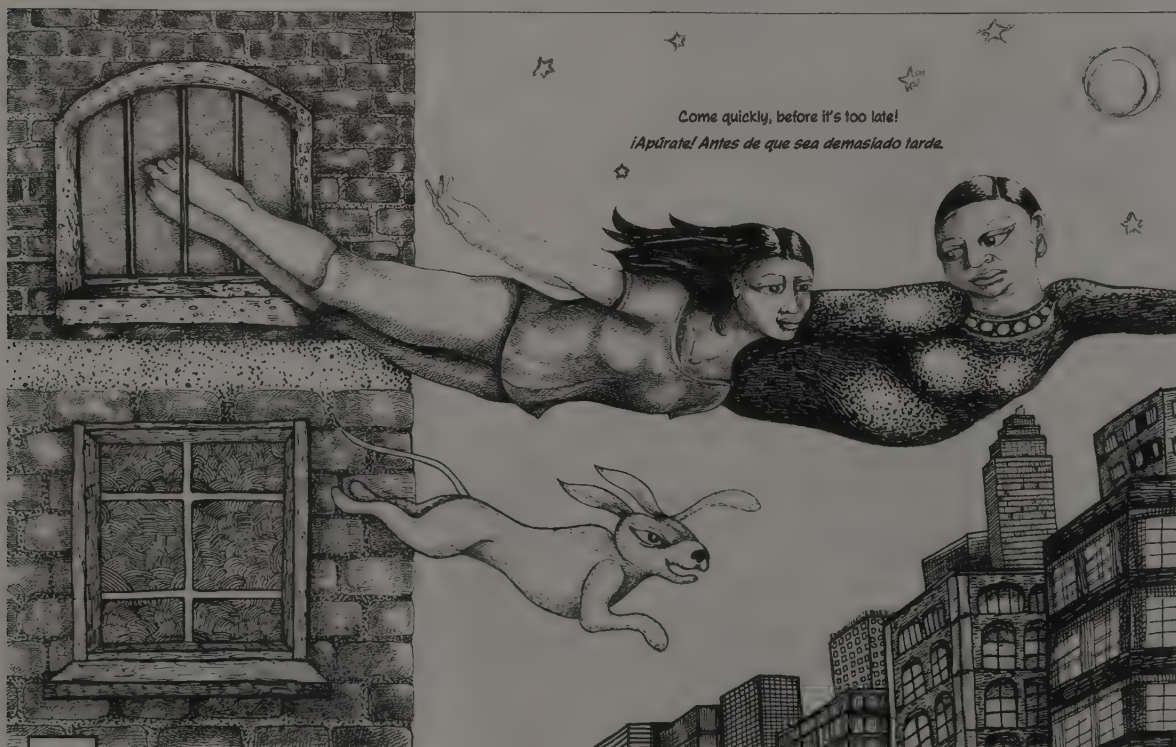
Después de clase, se regresa a casa caminando seguida de su canchanchán, el fiel y noble Pepito.

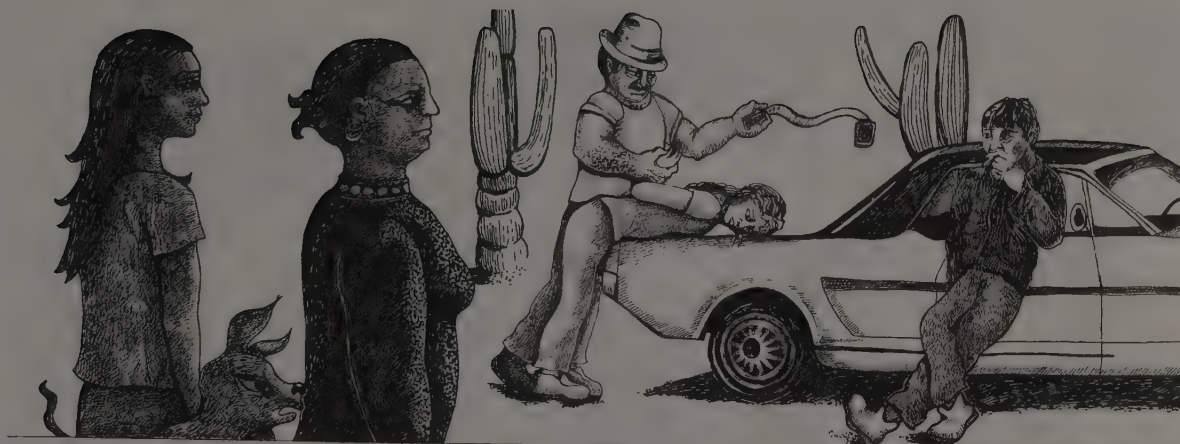




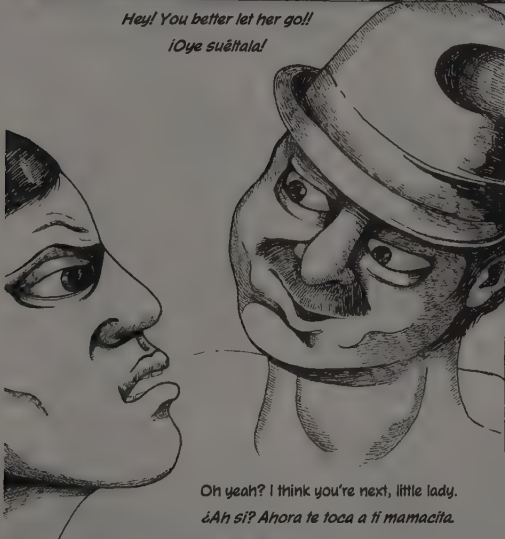
At night, a very mysterious woman awakens Marta and leads her into the dark city.

En la noche una misteriosa mujer despierta a Marta y la conduce por la oscuridad de la ciudad.





Hey! You better let her go!!
¡Oye suéttala!



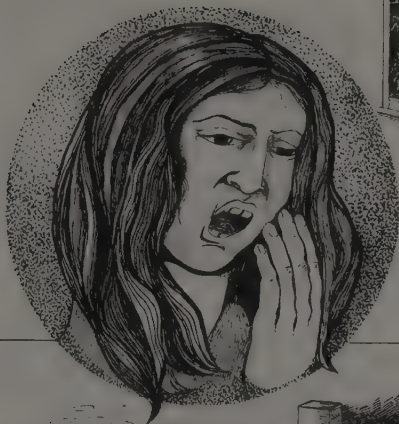
Oh yeah? I think you're next, little lady.
¿Ah sí? Ahora te toca a ti mamacita.



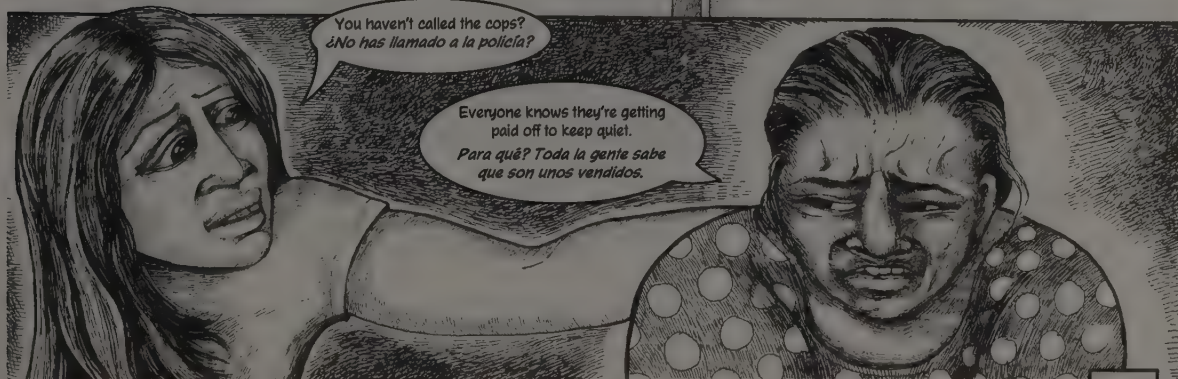
Spluff!!







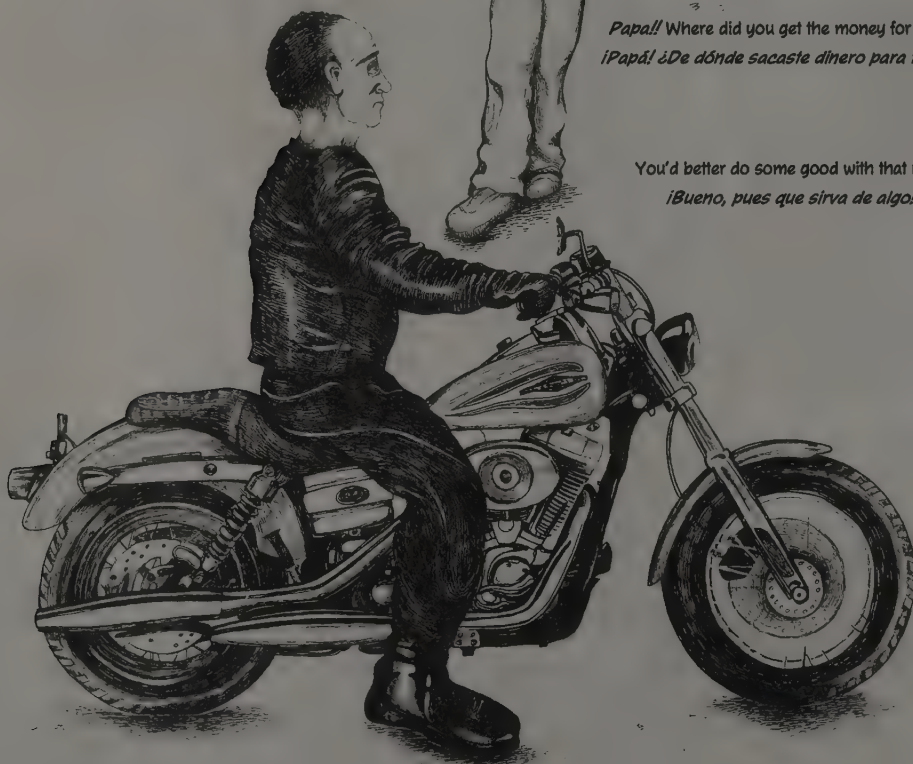
... Next morning, Maria is very sleepy, so she goes out to buy coffee.
... A la mañana siguiente, aún con sueño, María sale por un cafecito.





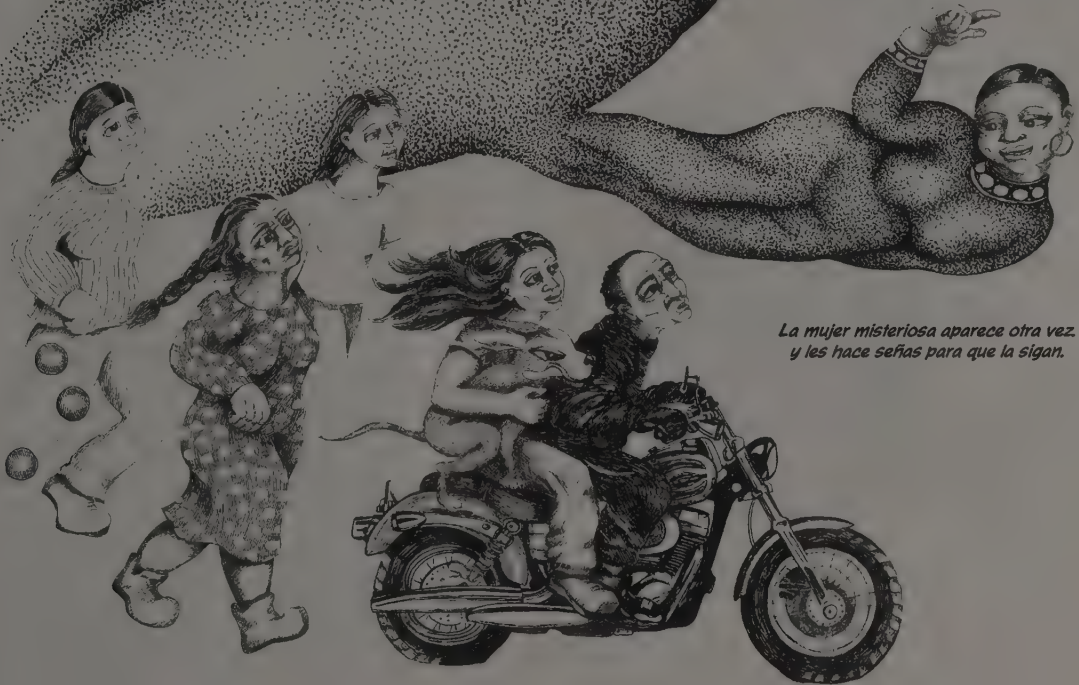
Papa!! Where did you get the money for a bike?!
¡Papá! ¿De dónde sacaste dinero para tu moto?

You'd better do some good with that now!
¡Bueno, pues que sirva de algo!

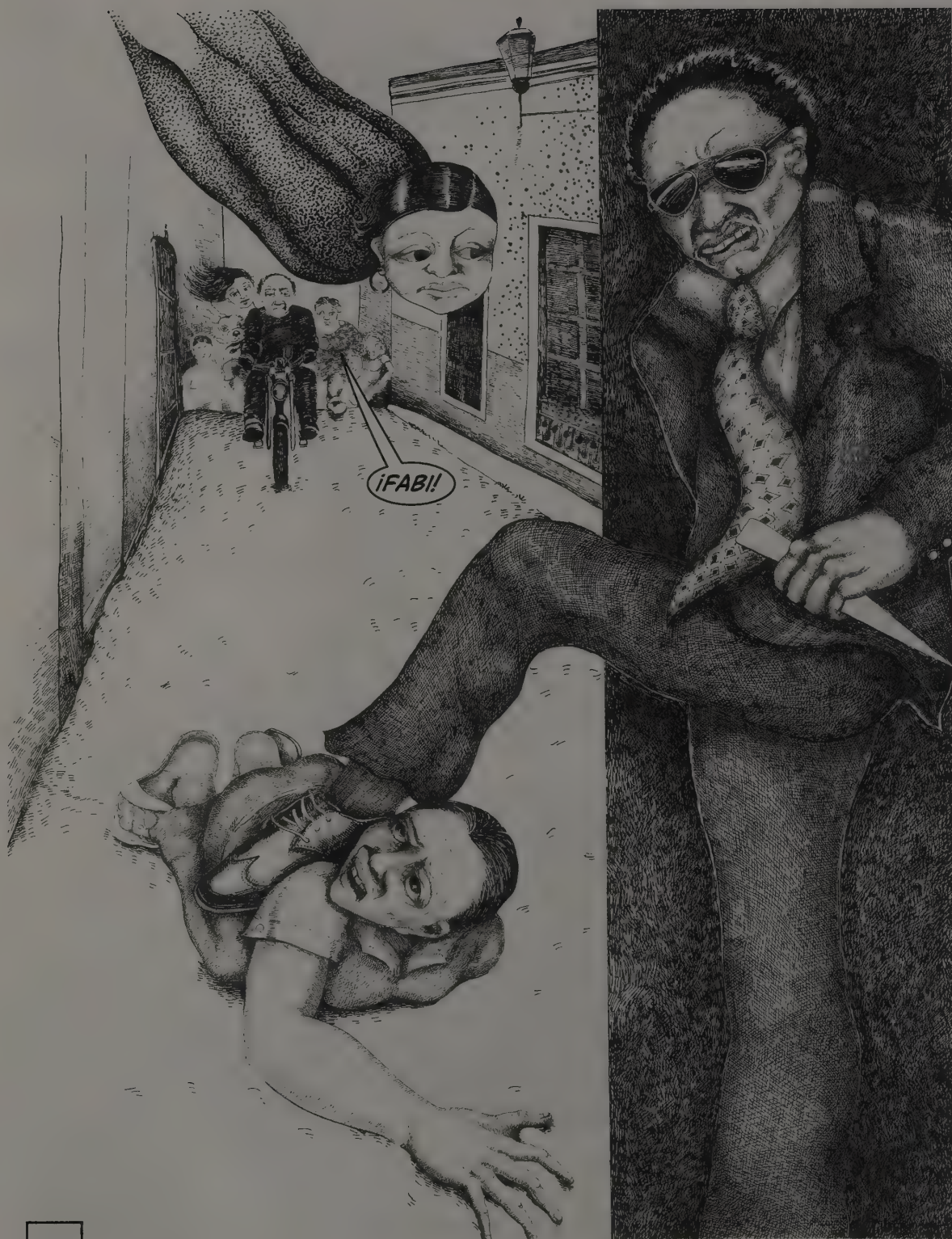


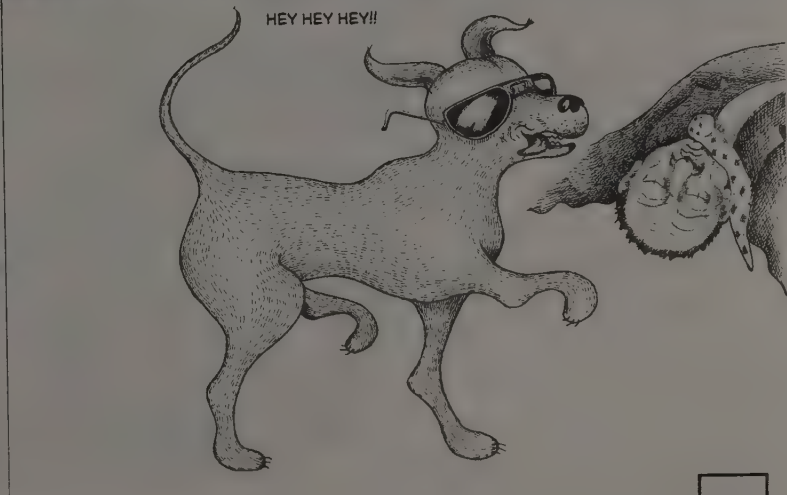
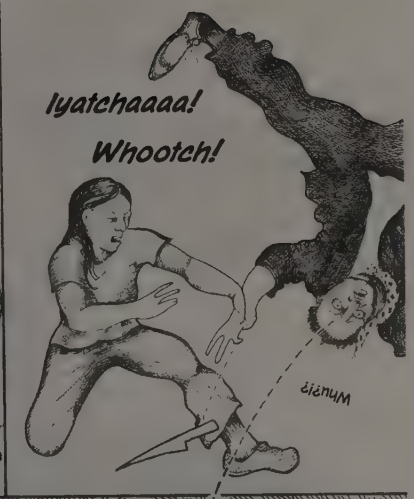
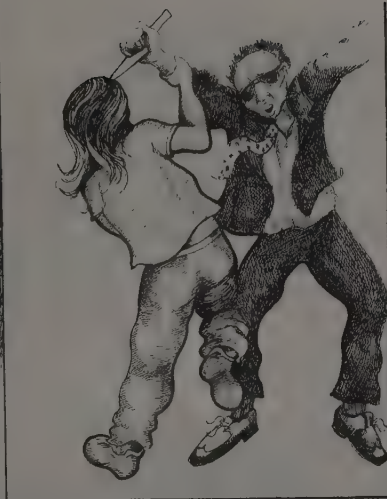


The mysterious woman appears again.
She beckons for them to follow.



La mujer misteriosa aparece otra vez
y les hace señas para que la sigan.



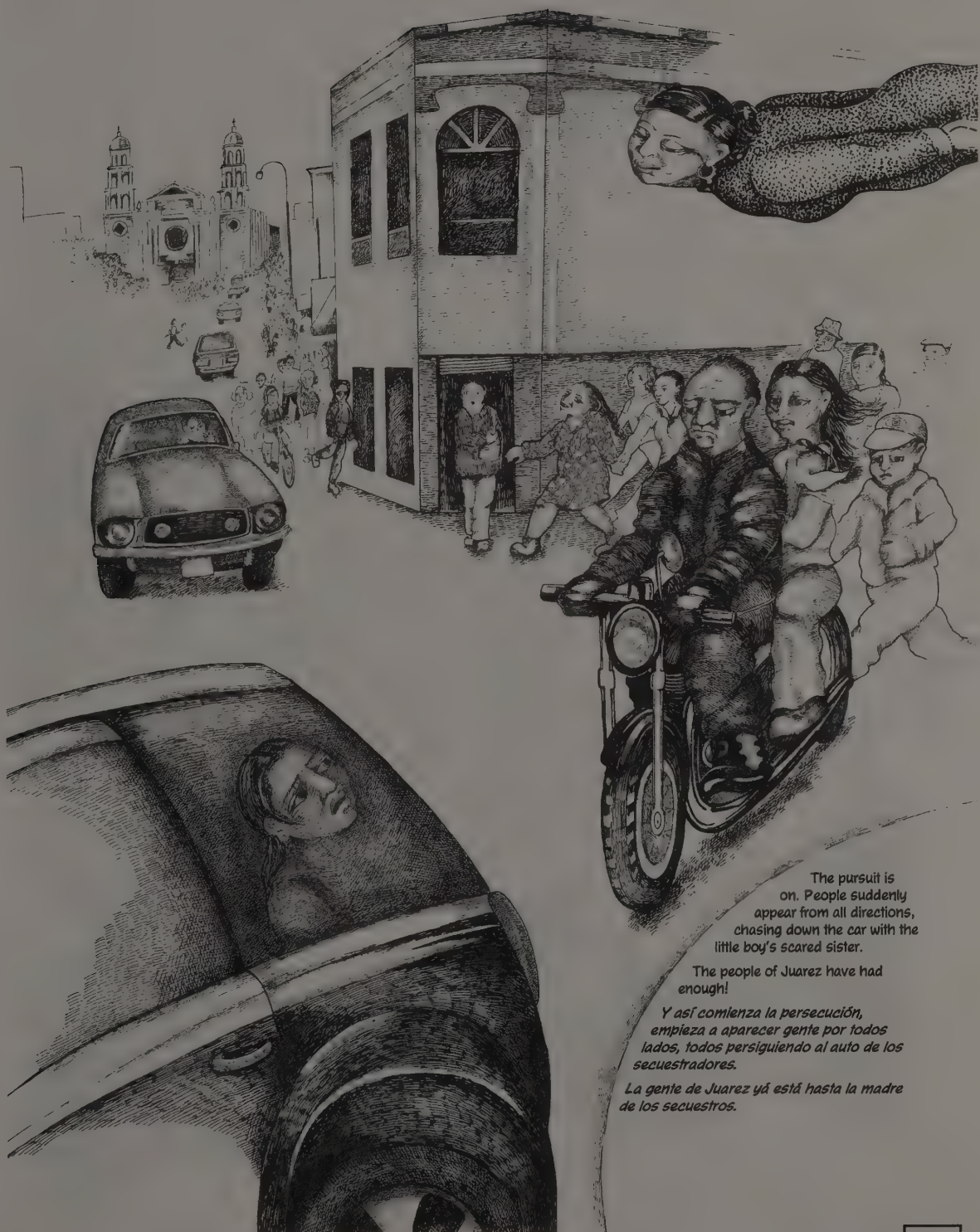


A little later . . .
Un Poco Mas tarde . . .

ALTO

DOLARES DOLARES

Heeeelp!! They took
my sister! Stop them!
*¡Ayúdenme! ¡Secuestraron a mi hermana!
¡Párenlooooo!*



The pursuit is on. People suddenly appear from all directions, chasing down the car with the little boy's scared sister.

The people of Juarez have had enough!

Y así comienza la persecución, empieza a aparecer gente por todos lados, todos persiguiendo al auto de los secuestradores.

La gente de Juarez ya está hasta la madre de los secuestradores.

Soon, hordes of people surround the perpetrators.

En minutos, los criminales se vieron completamente rodeados.



We've had enough!!!!
¡Ni una más, no señor!





I promised I'd tell you how I met Marta. I don't remember what she does during the day.
She might be a teacher, a maquiladora or a hair dresser.
But I met her at night, in my dreams.

*No recuerdo que hace Marta durante el da. Tal vez sea maestra, maquiladora o estilista.
Pero prometí decirles cómo conocí a Marta ¿Quieres saber?
La conocí una noche, en mis sueños.*

Please come with us, quickly!
Women all over the world need your help.

Porfavor, ¡únete ahora!
Son muchas las mujeres que necesitan de nuestra ayuda!

Érika

Fabiola

Liliana

Maria Elena

Ana Lidia

... y muchas, muchas más.













Mona & the Little Smile

Mona & Das Leise Lächeln



For all the children who got their smiles back by
squatting on the earth and putting their minds together—
and for all those who will.

*Für alle Kinder die ihr Lächeln wiederfanden in dem sie sich auf
den Erdboden hockten und die Köpfchen zusammensteckten—
und für die, die das noch tun werden.*

Introduction

Sarah Lightman

It may seem that comics are a surprising format for Maureen Burdock's "Mona & the Little Smile," a story of sexual abuse, but autobiographical comics have been a venue for coming to terms with personal atrocities for many decades. In terms of content and audience, Art Spiegelman's Holocaust memoirs *Maus* (1986–1991), were a watershed for the art form. However, I would like to suggest that Burdock's "Mona & the Little Smile" has older roots, first appearing in the 1970s and continuing to flourish into the present, with women illustrating their lives, their stories—*herstories*. Through the brave and intimate sharing of personal stories of domestic violence, abuse and personal tragedy, grief and rage dissipate with repeated exposure to light and air and validation of shared experience.

In her graphic memoir *Love That Bunch*, Aline Kominsky-Crumb includes a distressing rape encounter told with a dispassionate tone and depicts her father forcing himself on her mother. And the title of Diane Noomin's seminal work, *Baby Talk: A Tale of Four Miscarriages*, reveals her no longer private tragedies.

These life stories happened in internalized spaces: miscarriages inside the woman's body, sexual and spousal abuse within the family, in the family home. Comics, in their constructed and contained world of panels and borders, offer a space both closed and open to the public. These everyday stories that have previously been silenced, or kept hidden in cultures of silence, find a voice and a space on the comics page.

In this telling of a harrowing story of child sexual abuse the pages are insistent, like recurring nightmares, recreating the trauma, yet in doing so also catalyzing transformation. Clara Jo Stember, an art therapist who was a pioneer in helping sexually abused children, noted: "Since the trauma of sexual abuse is primarily psychological, artwork can provide a vehicle for bringing even deeply repressed trauma to the surface."

Many pages of "Mona & the Little Smile" are just images, and it is possible to read the story without words. Additionally, the minimal text appears in English and German indicating how her experience, and the vulnerability of children, is not limited to one culture. Mona later uses her drawings to save children from around the world: language becomes irrelevant as the drawings are universally understood.

Also depicted are how the traumatic events resulted in Mona's need to create an alternative self. Other symptoms of dissociation are reflected in the comic as the narrative develops from reality into fantasy, and as the illustrations change from tightly rendered pen drawings to colorful whimsical paintings.

Mona is shown making "magical drawings" and sending them "to children in danger." These drawings save the children, and the victims decide to punish the perpetrators by reduction: "Collectively they decide that all child molesters would be turned into organic, harmless life forms ... mushrooms." Mona is drawn squatting near the mushrooms: "She felt wonderful, the mushrooms were perfectly silly." The beginning and end of "Mona & the Little Smile" are filled with these mushrooms, richly painted, in earthy colors. These pages of paintings have no words; those guilty of the crimes of abuse are silenced and disempowered and the children, whose stories have now been shared, and thus validated, can begin to heal.









Mona took her first breath in a small city in Germany.
Mona nahm in einer kleinen deutschen Stadt ihren ersten Atemzug.



She smiled a lot. Most of the time.
Sie lächelte sehr viel. Meistens.



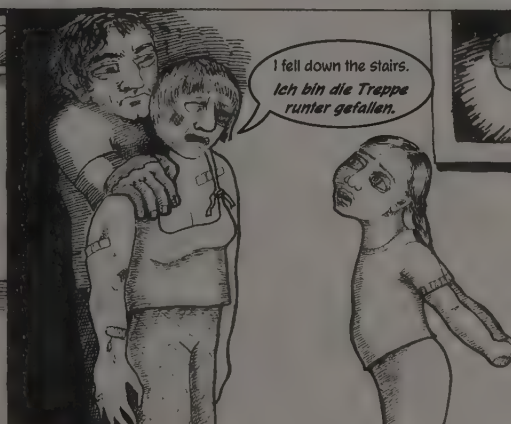
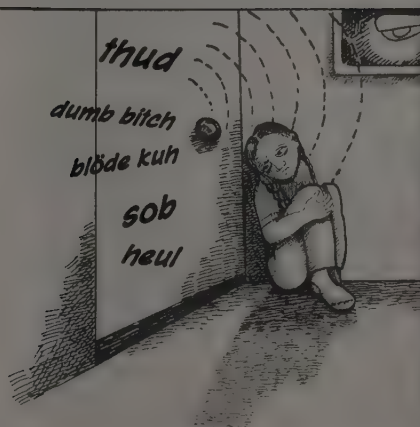
She grew up like a normal little German girl.

Sie wurde ganz normal als kleines deutsches Mädchen erzogen.



Or did she? What was normal, really?

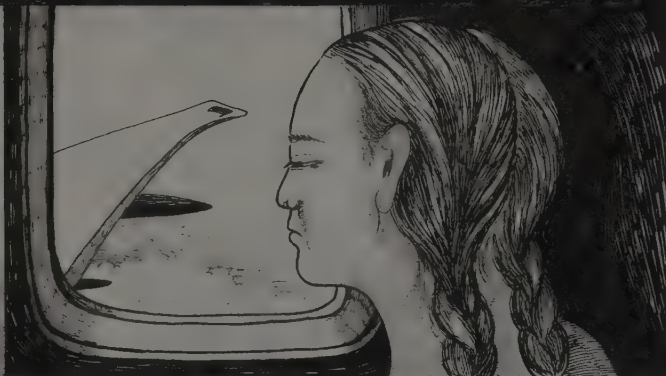
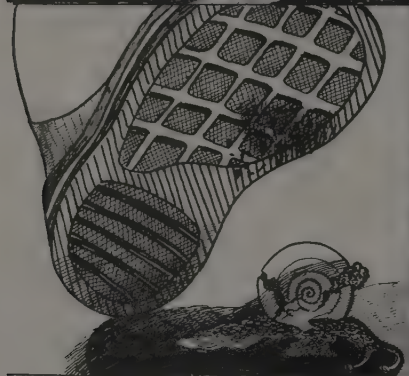
wurde sie das wirklich? Was heißt normal?



Mona tried to figure it out in her own way.

Mona versuchte, auf ihre eigene Art, die Situation zu verstehen.

Have sex now or I'll kill you both!
Ihr habt jetzt Sex oder ich bring Euch um!



Mona and her mother ran away to America. Mother went back to Germany to finalize the divorce.

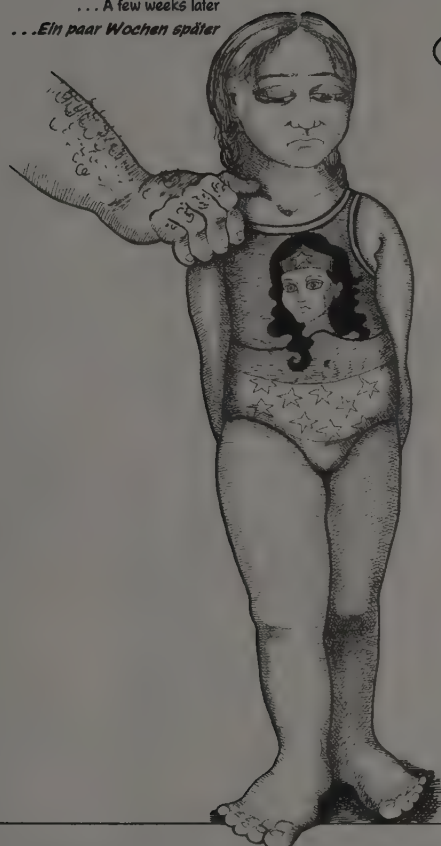
Mona und ihre Mutter flüchteten nach Amerika. Mutter kehrte nach Deutschland zurück, um den Scheidungsprozess zu erledigen.

You'll visit Uncle Victor
Du besuchst Onkel Victor

Scar from war wound
Narbe von einer Kriegswunde



... A few weeks later
... Ein paar Wochen später



Wow, you sure got fat!
Man, bist du dick geworden!



After this, Mona lost her smile. She only found joy in books, especially about artists.
Das Lächeln war Mona entgangen. Sie fand nur noch an Büchern über Künstler Freude.

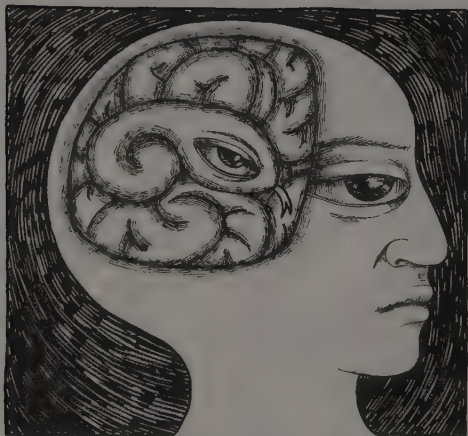






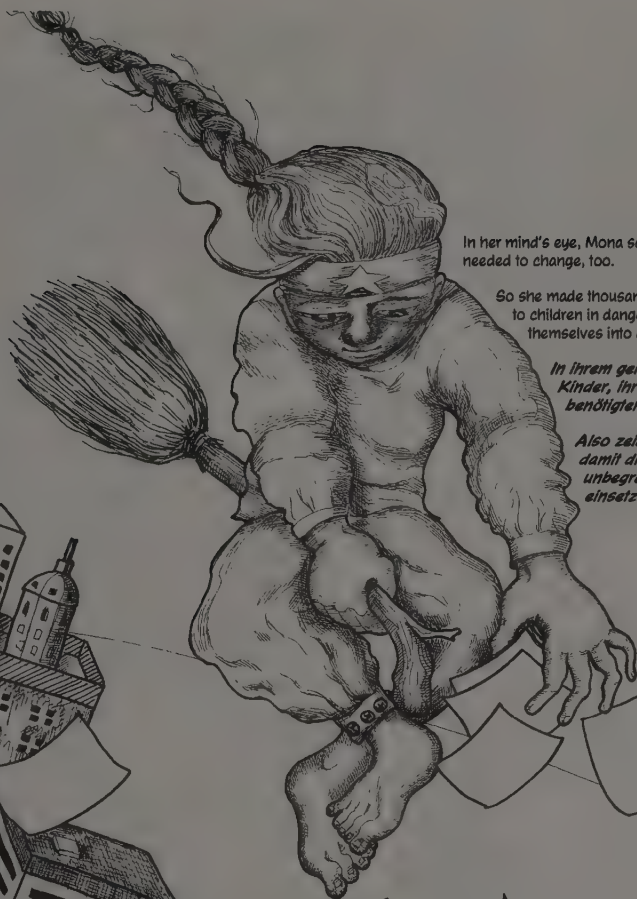
Mona saw that art can change things,
so she drew and drew until she changed herself.

*Mona glaubte, dass Kunst alles umgestalten kann.
Sie malte und malte bis sie sich selbst umgewandelt hatte.*



Medical illustration of the mind's eye.
Medizinische Abbildung des geistigen Auges.



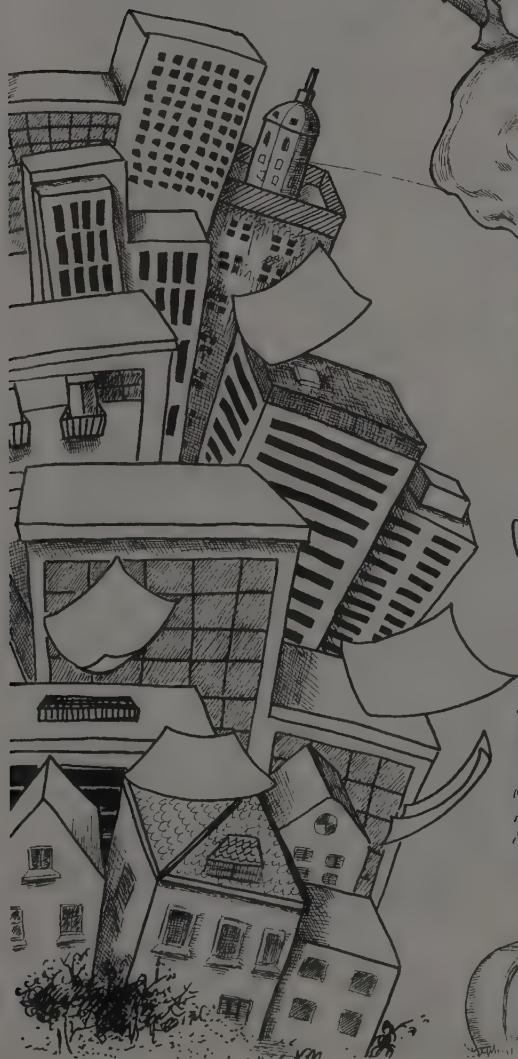


In her mind's eye, Mona saw that many children like herself still needed to change, too.

So she made thousands of magical drawings and sent them to children in danger, who could use them to transform themselves into any shape they wanted.

In ihrem geistigen Auge sah Mona, dass viele Kinder, ihr selbst ähnlich, noch Umwandlung benötigten.

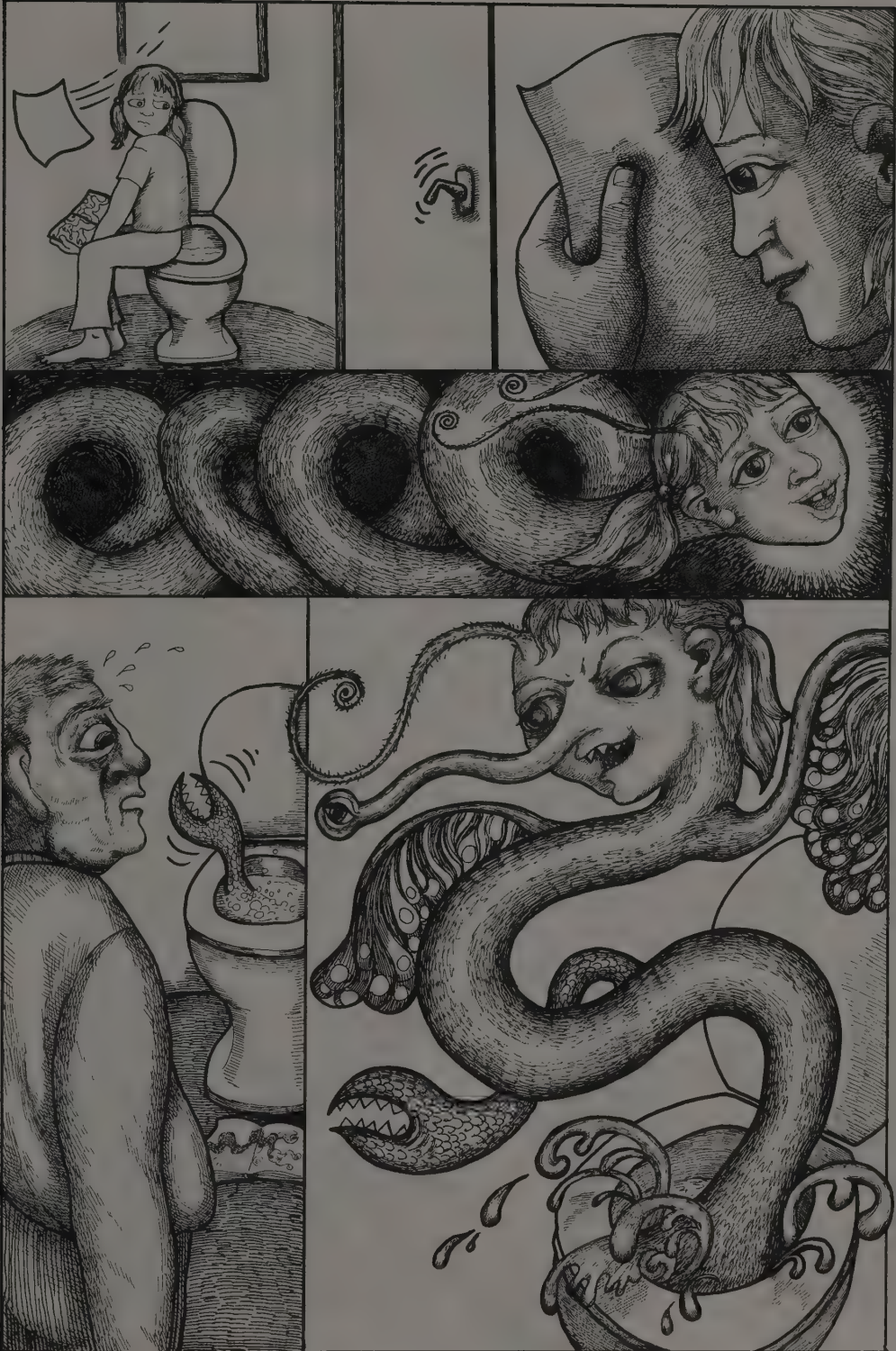
Also zeichnete sie tausende von Bildern, damit die Kinder in Gefahr sie zu unbegrenzten Verwandlungsmöglichkeiten einsetzen könnten.

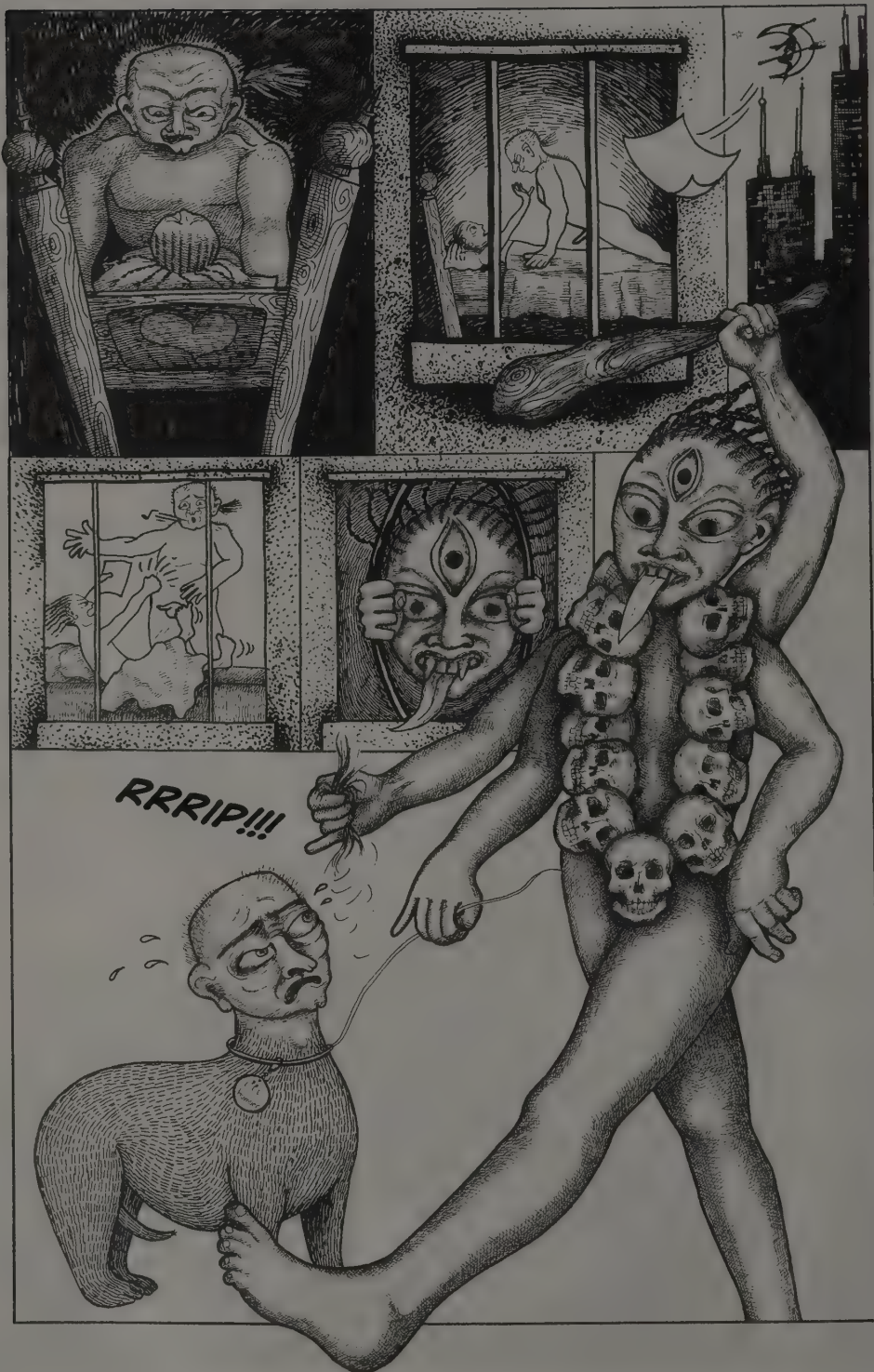


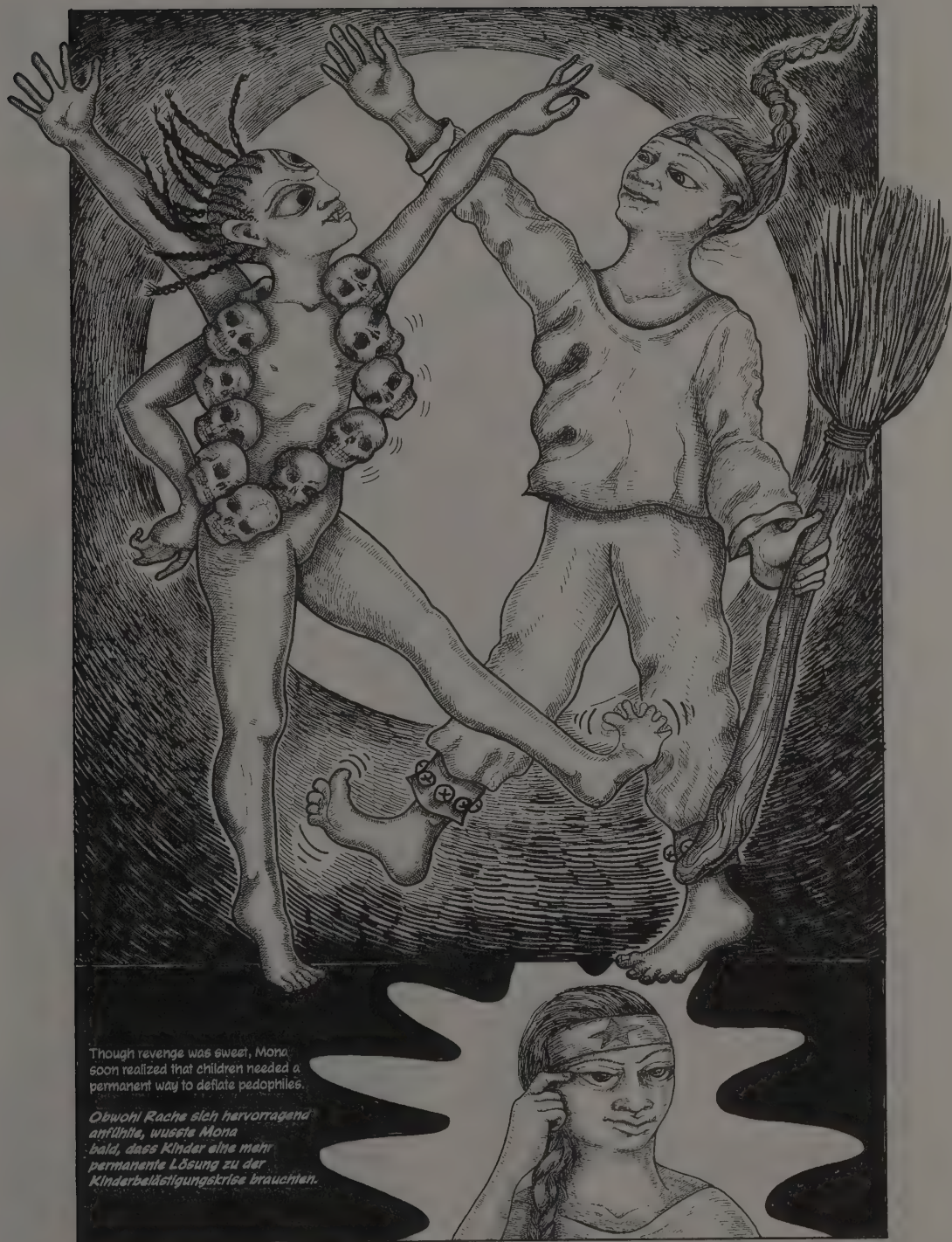


Upon reaching the innocent ones, the drawings caused awesome calamity!
Als die Zeichnungen die Kleinen erreichten, stellten sie alles total auf den Kopf!









Though revenge was sweet, Mona soon realized that children needed a permanent way to deflate pedophiles.

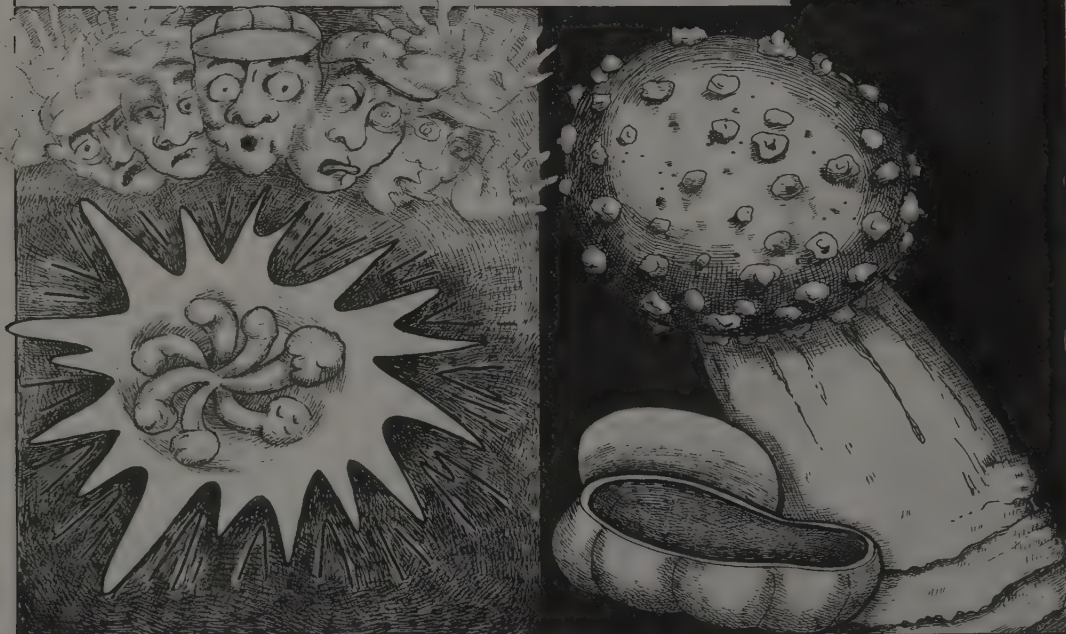
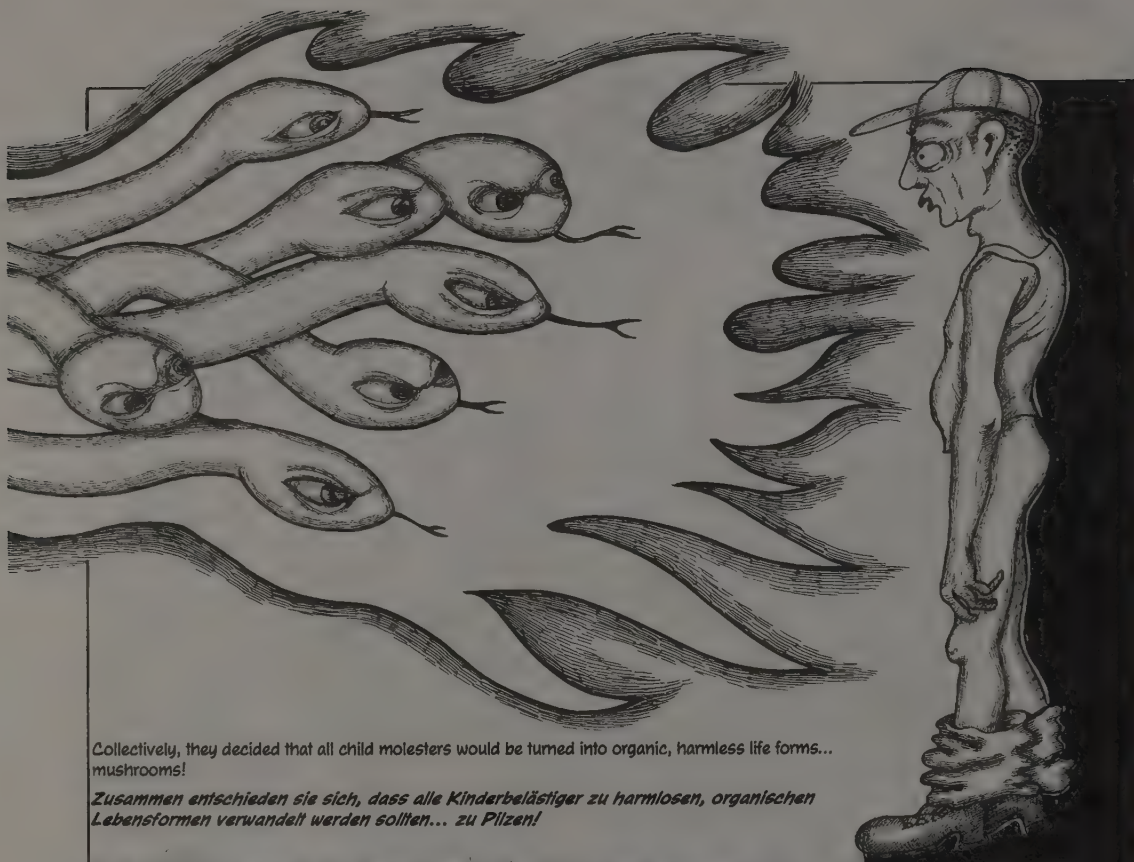
Obwohl Rache sich hervorragend anfühlte, wusste Mona bald, dass Kinder eine mehr permanente Lösung zu der Kinderbelästigungskrise brauchten.



The children put their minds together.



*Die Kinder steckten ihre
Köpfchen zusammen.*



Mona squatted on the damp earth. She felt wonderful.
The mushrooms were perfectly silly! Mona smiled softly.

*Mona hockte sich auf den feuchten Erdboden.
Sie fühlte sich wohl. Die Pilze waren total albern!
Mona lächelte leise.*







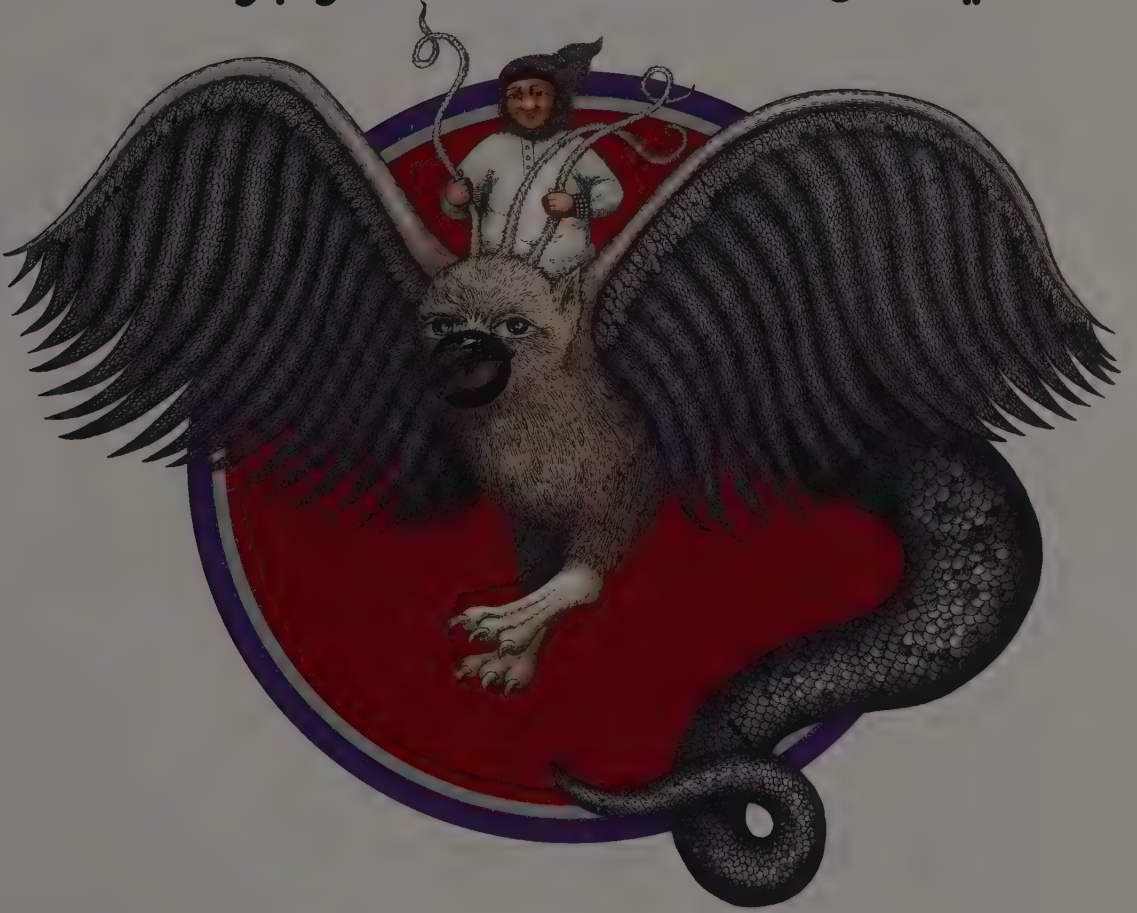






Maisa *& the Most Daring Muslim Women*

ميساء والنساء المسلمات الأكثر جرأة



Arabic Translation by Halima Mohammed Abdel Rahman
ترجمة تحليمة محمد عبد الرحمن

مقدمة

كانت البداية عندما تكرمت صديقة مشترك بيني والمؤلفة مورين يردوك بتقديمي إليها في يناير 9002، وكان يحذوني فضول كبير لمعرفة خبايا مشروع البلاغ النسوي وما يتعلق به، وقد أخبرني صديقتي بأن مورين كانت حينها تكتب رواية، وكانت تبحث عن أفكار لتطوير شخصية بطلة الرواية، والتي هي امرأة مسلمة، مثلي. "بطلة؟" هذا نجاح باهر! تمتعت بهجة خفية لنفسي. وقد كانت رحلتي مع مورين وما أعقبها من صداقة حميمة ممتعة للغاية، أغنت حياتي بشكل مدهش.

هذه الرواية "مساء والفتيات المسلمات الأكثر جرأة" تناول فعلا وحشيا هو "جرائم الشرف" التي ترتكب باسم الدين. بلى إنه الرعب الذي تواجهه بعض النساء المسلمات ويقاسن منه في ثقافتهن. مع ذلك وكما سيعلم القراء، الاسلام لم يعلم المسلمين كيف يكونوا قساة القلوب وعنيفين. بل علمنا الله ان نهدي إلى الحق مسترشدين بقلوبنا منابع الحب والتسامح.

أنا امرأة مسلمة، نشأت والحمد لله في بيئة علمتنا الدين ولم تفرضه علينا فرضاً. فأبي، رغم تشدده الظاهر في تفسير بعض الآيات القرآنية والنصوص الشرعية الأخرى، كان يشجعنا على تكوين فهمنا الخاص لمعاني الدين. بصورة عامة كان يحوى الرسالة التي وصلتنا ان نكون رحماء، عطوفين ومحبين وأن نبعد عن الحكم على الآخرين.

هذه المبادئ ساهمت في توجيهي ليس كإمرأة مسلمة نشأت في أمريكا، وإنما كإنسان مر بكل الأحوال التي مرت بها في حياتي. إن كان الأمر الذي خبرته يبدو غير محتمل ولا يمكن غفرانه، وإن كانت رغبي في الإنتقام لا تقاوم، لكن الدرس الذي تعلمته، والخلاصة التي وصلت إليها تماهت مع الرسالة المضمنة في هذه الرواية: هناك سلام في التسامح. إن الراحة والسلام في الغفران وليس عبر الإنتقام.

في اعتقادي أن هناك خاصية أخرى تمتاز بها هذه الرواية وهي المشاركة، والتي تعد جزءاً أصيلاً لا ينفصل عنها. فالمشاركة تمهد السبيل إلى السلوان و الشفاء. في اعتقادي أن عملية طهي الطعام وتقاسمه مع الآخرين، على بساطتها، تساهم كثيراً في الشفاء. وأنا أحس بسعادة غامرة لأن عملية طهي الطعام تأتي في قلب هذه الرواية، والتي تصور بقوة كيف أن مشاطرة الطعام والحكايات القصصية من الأنشطة الخلاقة، التي تترك آثاراً مدهشة ورائعة في نفوسنا. وبما أن هذه المراسم شكلت جزءاً كبيراً من الوسط الثقافي الذي نشأت فيه، فقد ظلت عالقة بذاكرتي إلى اليوم.

إن اتخاذ الصفح والمشاركة والابتكار حلولاً في التغلب على هذه أوجعها من المصائب، ليست شأنًا روائياً بحتاً. فأنا أعيش واتنفس دليلاً على أن هذه اطروحات حقيقية لإيجاد السلام والعدالة. أمل من النساء والرجال في جميع انحاء العالم أن يطلعوا ويتشاركوا ويحذقوا في تشكيل الطرق المساعدة في نشر هذه الرسالة القوية. أمل أن تجد النساء اللاتي يؤثر عليهن هذا الأمر أكثر من غيرهن العدالة والسلام الذي ينشدنه.

روينا كوهين

Dear Arabic reader, please take notice that the panels in this story are meant to be read from left to right.

تنبيه

عزيزي القارئ/عزيزتي القارئة

أنوه إلى أنه يمكن قراءة الأطر الحاوية للنصوص في هذه الرواية من اليسار الى اليمين!

Introduction

Rubina Cohen

When a mutual friend introduced me to Maureen Burdock in January 2009, I was curious to find out what *The F Word Project* was all about. My friend told me Maureen was writing a novel, and she was looking for ideas as she developed the heroine of the story, who was Muslim, as I am. “A heroine? Wow!” I thought to myself. The journey I have taken with Maureen and the friendship that has ensued have enriched my life tremendously.

This fable, “Maisa & the Most Daring Muslim Women,” is about the heartless act of “honor killings” in the name of Allah. Yes, this is a horror that some Muslim women have to live with and endure in their culture. Yet, as readers will learn, Islam does not teach Muslims to be heartless and violent. In fact, we are taught to lead with our hearts, from a place of love and forgiveness.

I am a Muslim woman who was raised, thankfully, in a household where religion was taught but not imposed on us. My father, though strict in reading and interpreting passages from the Qur’an and other Islamic texts, also encouraged us to find our own meaning. Generally, the message we were given was to be kind, gentle, and loving, and not to judge others.

These principles have guided me not just as a Muslim woman growing up in America but also as a human being who has been through my own horrors in life. At the time, what I was going through seemed unbearable and unforgivable, and I wanted revenge. Yet the lessons I have learned, and the conclusions I have come to, are in line with the message that comes through in this fable: there is justice in forgiving. It’s not through revenge but through forgiving that one will find peace and heal.

Another big piece for me was about sharing, which is an integral part of this story. Sharing offers yet another path to solace and healing. For me, the simple act of cooking and sharing food with others has brought so much healing, and I am thrilled that cooking is at the heart of this story. It powerfully illustrates how the creative acts of sharing food and stories can have wondrous and miraculous effects on our souls. Having been a big part of the culture I was raised in, sharing such sustenance remains important to me today.

Forgiving, sharing, and creating, as solutions to cope with this and other kinds of calamity, are not just for fiction writing. I am living and breathing proof that these are true paths to finding peace and justice. I hope that women and men around the world read, share, and create ways to spread the word about this powerful message. I hope that the women this touches the most find the justice and peace they are searching for.

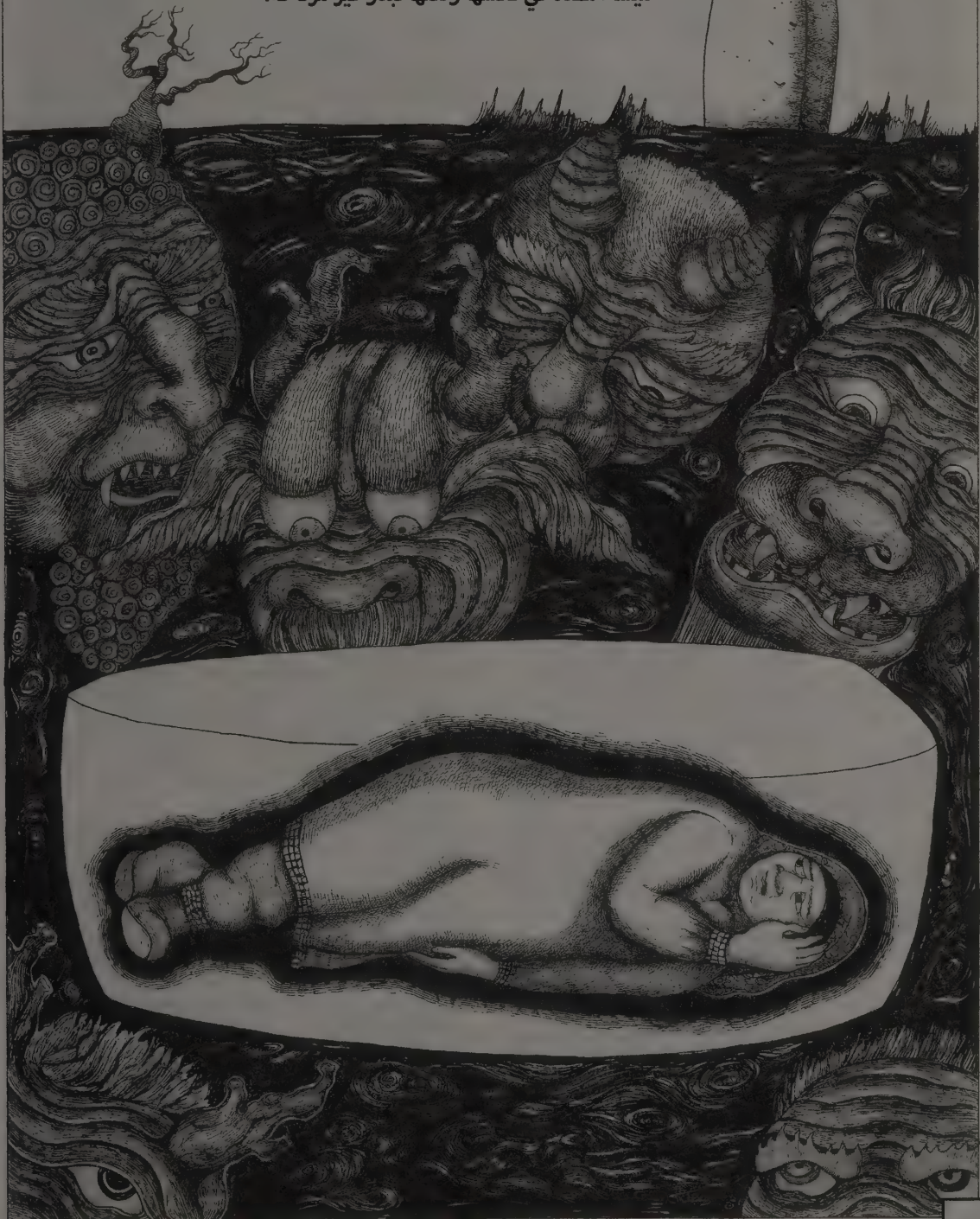






Maisa is buried in her coffin, but she cannot rest.

ميساء ممددة في نعشها ولكنها تبدو غير مرتاحة.



Suddenly...

فجأة..



Wha... ? Who are you?!
How did I get here?
ما...؟ من أنت؟ كيف جيت بي الى هنا؟

I am your djinn—
your soul, your spirit. You can call me Little Maisa.
أنا جنيتك، ونفسك، وروحك. يمكنك أن تتناديني "ميساء الصغيرة".

Maisa is very disoriented and can't remember how she died. Her djinn, Little Maisa, tells her what happened:

تبدو ميساء شديدة التشوش، ولا تذكر كيف رحلت عن الدنيا. فتقوم جنيتها، ميساء الصغيرة باخبارها:

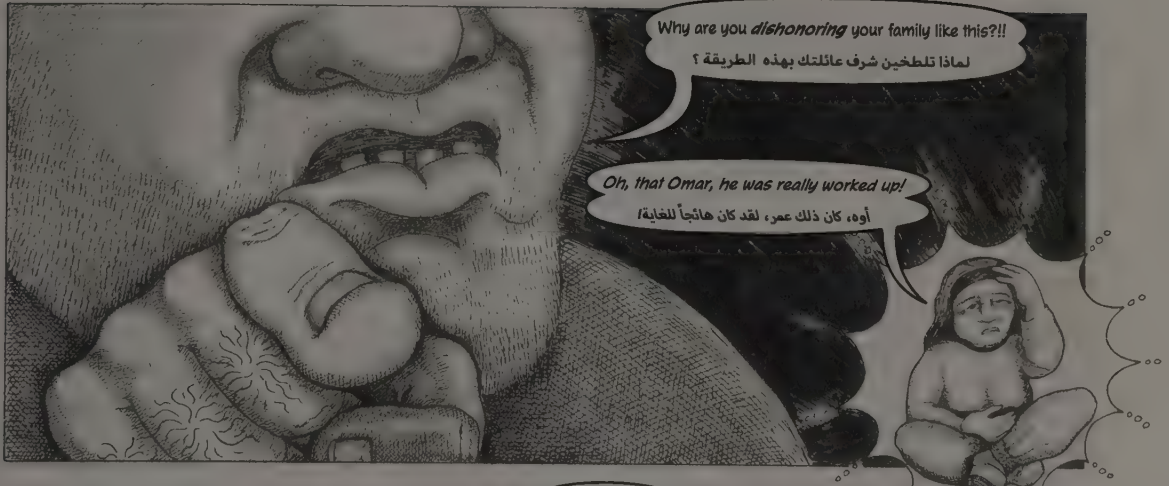
Your brother Omar came over for a visit. You and your daughter Lale were serving him tea.
He made it clear right away what was on his mind.

قدم اخوك عمر لزيارتك. فأنهمكت أنت و بنتك لالي في إعداد الشاي وتقديمه له. ثم عبر عما كان يجول في خاطره بجلاء منذ البداية.

Lale, my niece, I must speak to
your conscience now...
لالي، يا بنت أختي، يجب علي مخاطبة
ضميرك الآن...

... and you best listen to me!
I saw you with that Jewish boy again.
لقد رأيته مع ذلك الفتى اليهودي مجدداً.
يستحسن أن تصغي إلي





Why are you *dishonoring* your family like this?!!

لماذا تلطخين شرف عائلتك بهذه الطريقة ؟

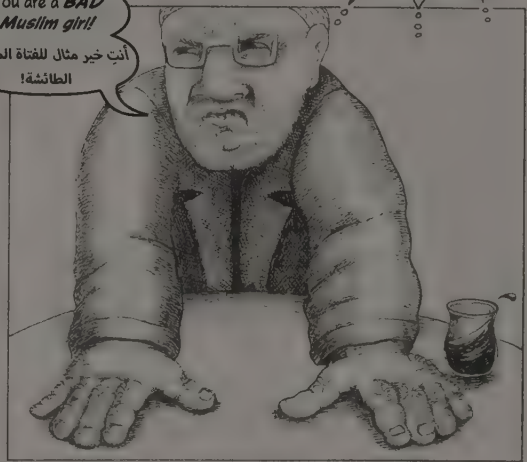
Oh, that Omar, he was really worked up!

أوه، كان ذلك عمر، لقد كان هائجاً للغاية!

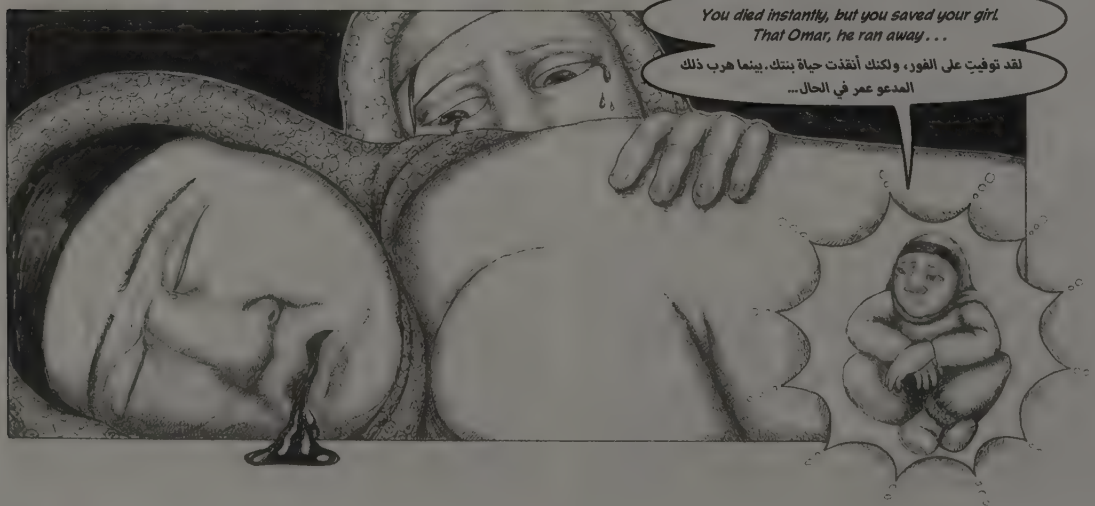
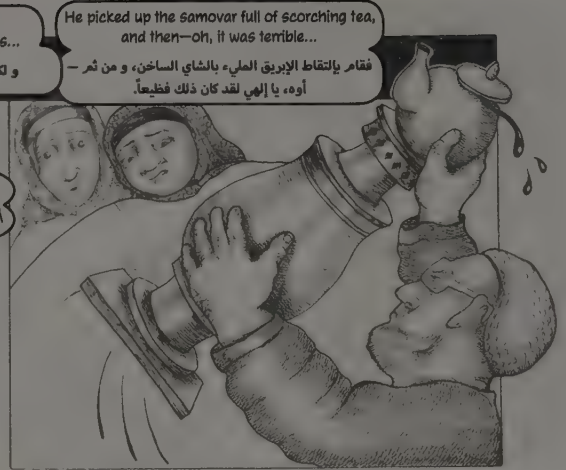


You are a **BAD Muslim girl!**
أنت خير مثال للفتاة المسلمة
الطائشة!

But Uncle Omar, I *love* Hakim!
لكنني أحب حكيم يا خالي عمر!



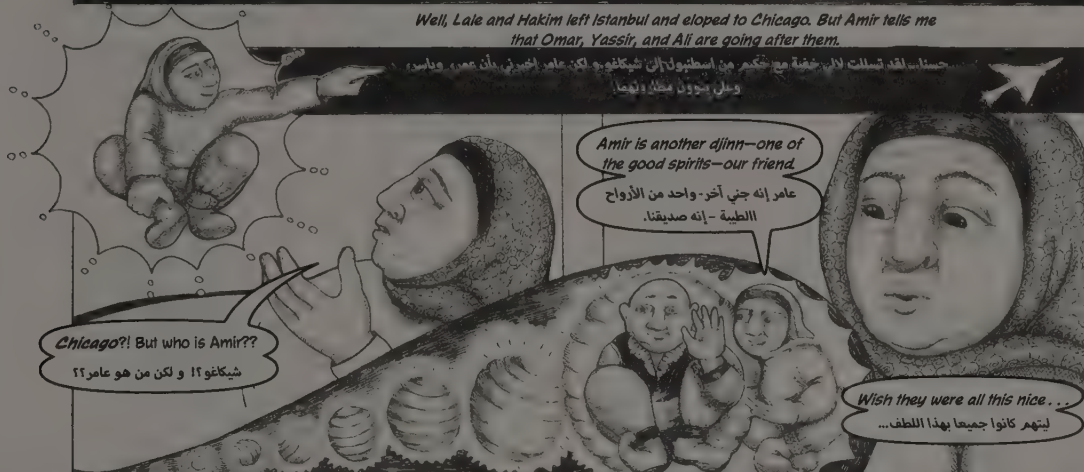
I had better never see you with that boy again or your
cousins Ali and Yassir and I will come after you!
من الأفضل ألا أراك مجدداً مع ذلك الفتى، وإلا سأقوم أنا وأبنائي علي و
ياسر بملاحقتك!





Well, Lale and Hakim left Istanbul and eloped to Chicago. But Amir tells me that Omar, Yassir, and Ali are going after them.

حسنًا لقد تسلمت لاله خفية مع حكيم من إسطنبول إلى شيكاغو. لكن عامر أخبرني بأن عمر، ياسر، وألي سيحاولون مطاردة لاله.



Chicago?! But who is Amir??

شيكاغو؟! و لكن من هو عامر؟

Wish they were all this nice...
ليتهم كانوا جميعاً بهذا اللطف...

Please, Little Maisa and Amir, can you help my Lale?

أرجوكم يا ميساء الصغيرة و عامر، هل تستطيعان مساعدة بنتي لالي؟

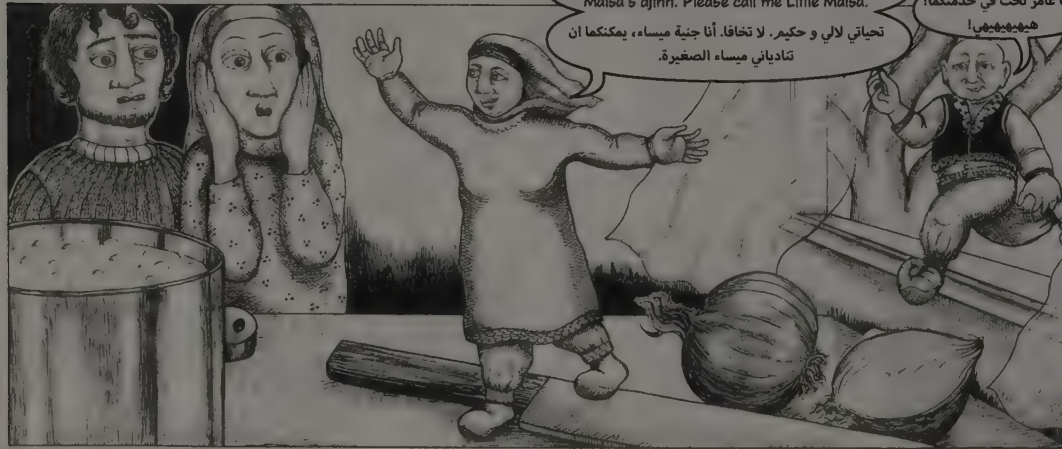
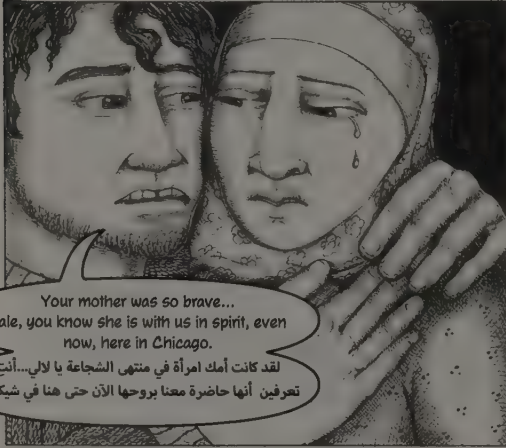
Yes, we'll bring her the magic recipe. Hopefully it's not too late.

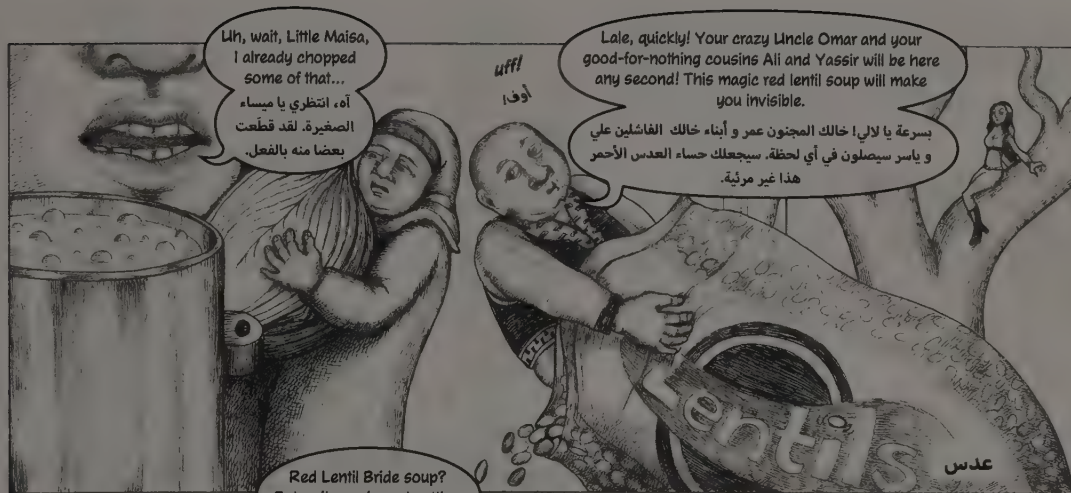
نعم . سنقوم باحضار الوصفة السحرية لها. نتمنى ان لا يكون الاوان قد فات.

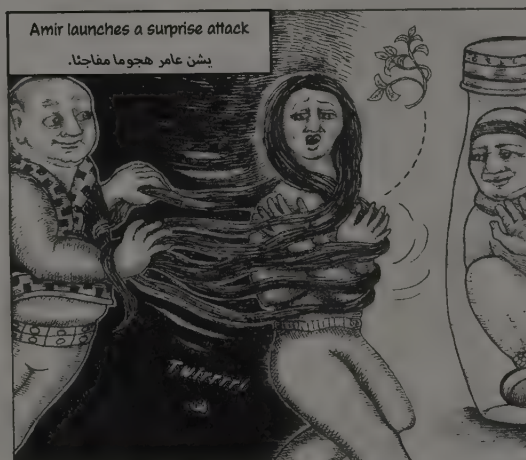
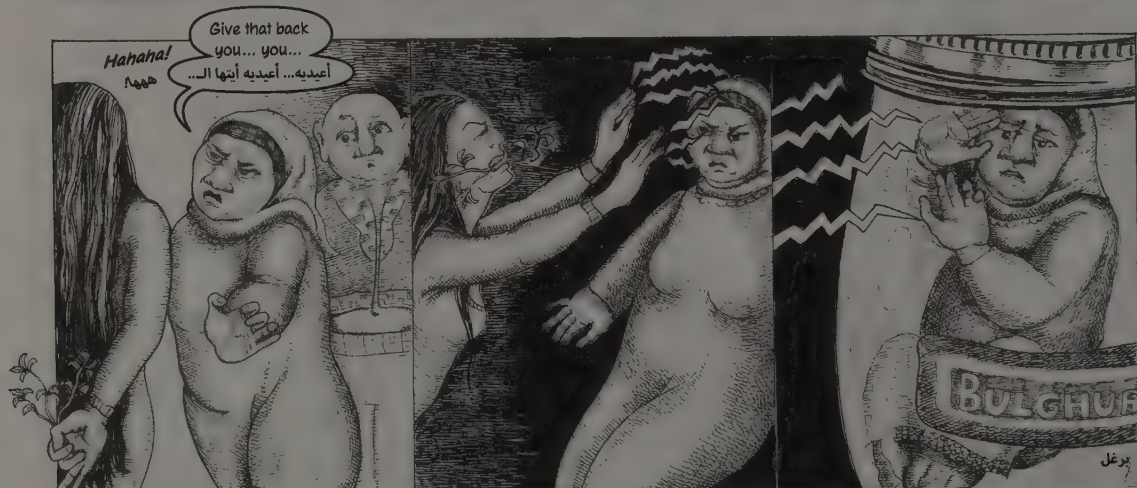
You have a rest now--you have earned it!!
يجب أن ترتاحي الآن - تستحقين بعض الراحة!

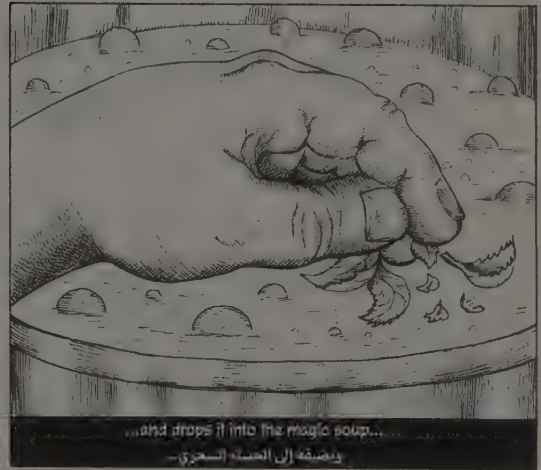
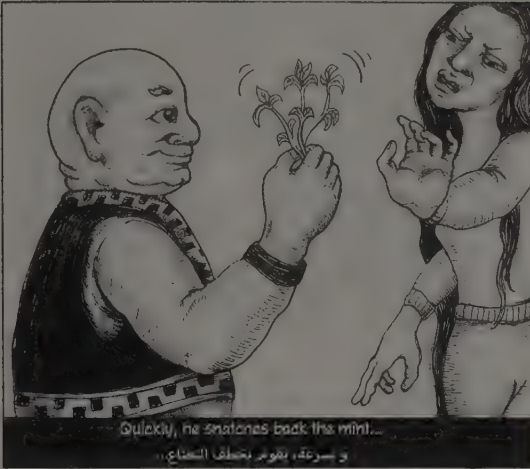
Magic recipe??
وصفة سحرية؟؟

Maisa's daughter, Lale, and her boyfriend, Hakim, arrive in Chicago and rent an apartment.
تصل لالي، بنت ميساء، و صديقها حكيم إلى شيكاغو و يقومان باستئجار شقة.



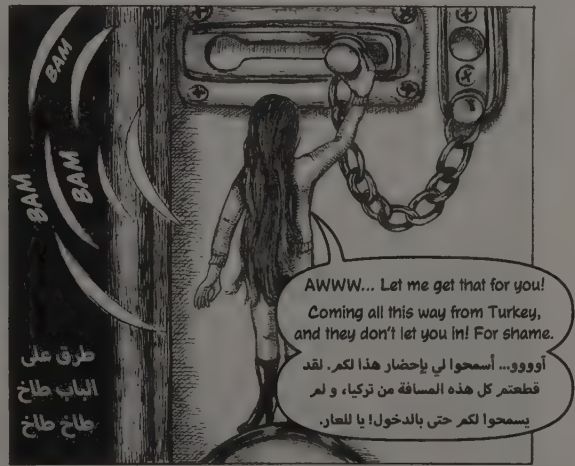
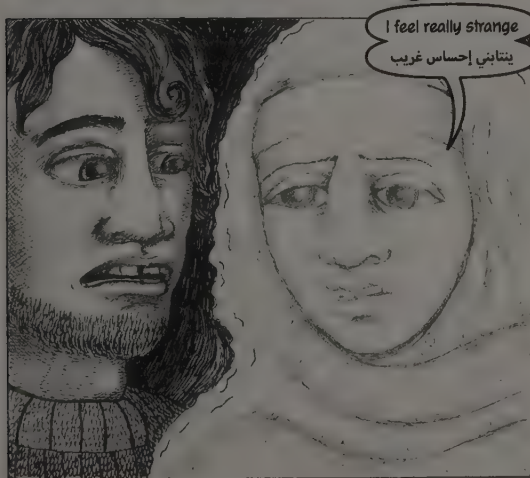






...just as Uncle Omar and his dreadful sons, Ali and Yassir, arrive.

في اللحظة التي يصل فيها الخال عمر وولديه البقيضين، علي و ياسر.



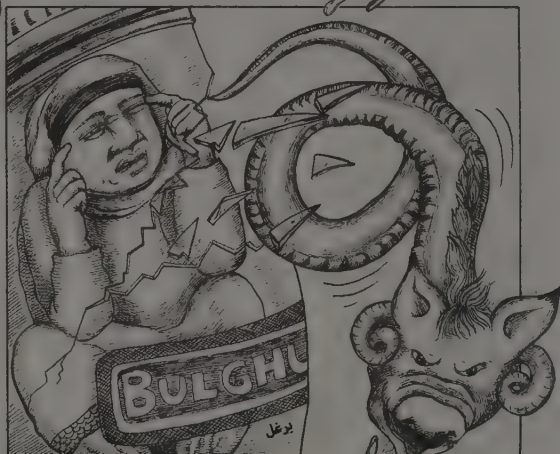
Hakim, where are you hiding that little harlot? She has brought disgrace upon our good family name. We are here to redeem our honor.

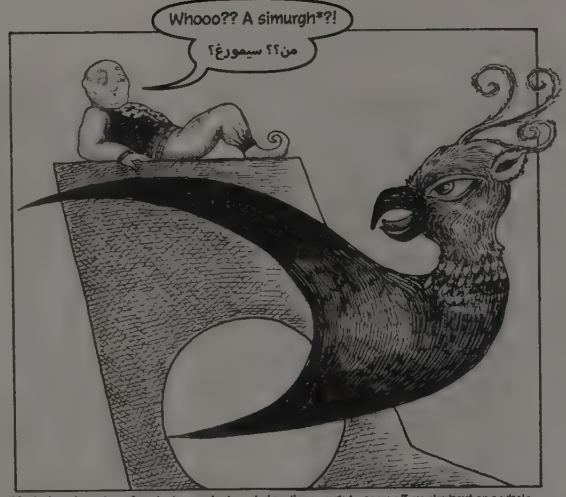
حكيم، اين تخفي تلك الفاجرة الصغيرة؟ لقد جلبت العار على اسم عائلتنا الطيب. آتينا إلى هنا لننقش العار عن شرفنا.



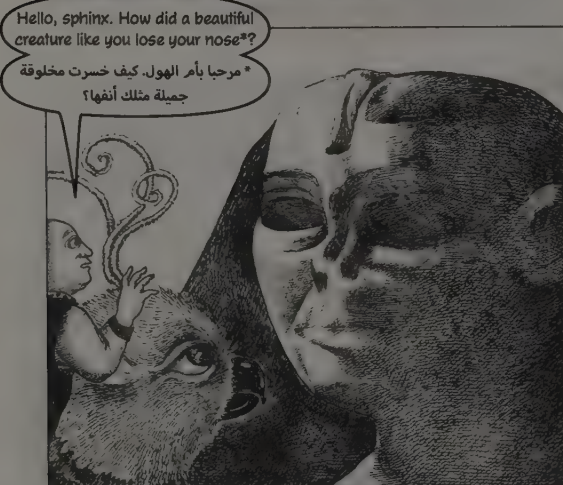
Maybe some hot soup in your face will jog your memory!

ربما يساعد بعض الحساء الساخن على وجهك في تنشيط ذاكرتك.





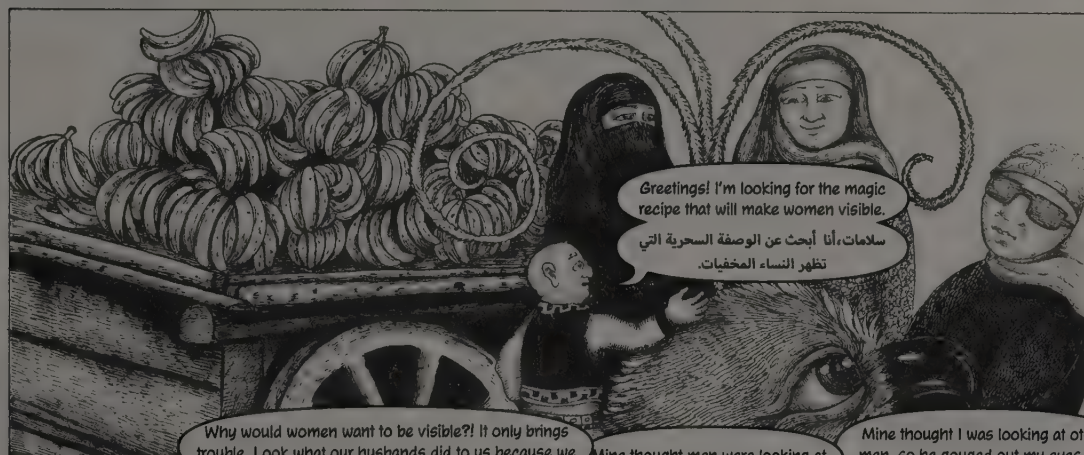
* A Persian mythical winged creature, female, benevolent, and gigantic enough to carry off an elephant or a whale.
 *السيمورغ هي مخلوقة أسطورية فارسية ذات أجنحة، محبسة، وعملقة بما يكفي لحمل فيل أو حوت على ظهرها.



*There have been many theories about how the great Sphinx of Giza lost her nose. It is believed that the nose was destroyed in 1378 by a Sufi fanatic, Muhammad Sa'im al-Dahr, who, enraged by the lifelike representation of a human face, ordered the nose be removed.

هناك العديد من التفسيرات للكيفية التي فقدت بها أمر الهول في الجزيرة أنفها. هناك اعتقاد سائد بأن سوفى متطرف اسمه محمد صائم الدهر قام سنة 8731 بتهديش أنف أمر الهول وذلك في إحدى فترات غضبه لمحاكاة وجهها بالوجه البشري.

Later that day, the simurgh and Amir land in a crowded Cairo market.
لاحقاً في ذلك اليوم، حط السيمورغ و عامر في أحد أسواق القاهرة المزدحمة.



Greetings! I'm looking for the magic recipe that will make women visible.
سلامات، أنا أبحث عن الوصفة السحرية التي تظهر النساء المخفيات.

Why would women want to be visible?! It only brings trouble. Look what our husbands did to us because we were too visible!

Mine thought men were looking at me, so he cut off my nose!

Mine thought I was looking at other men, so he gouged out my eyes. To preserve his honor, he said.

HEE HEE HAHAA!!

لماذا تريد النساء المخفيات أن يكن مرئيات؟ إن ذلك لا يجلب سوى المتاعب. أنظرون ماذا فعل بنا أزواجنا لأننا كنا مرئيات جداً!

لقد شك زوجي في أن الرجال ينظرون إلي، فما كان منه إلا أن قام بجدع أنفي!

أما أنا فقد ظن زوجي أنني استرق النظر إلى الرجال الآخرين، فما كان منه إلا أن قام باقتلاع عيني. وقال إنه فعل ذلك حفاظاً على شرفه.





I understand the problem!
أنا اتفهم الوضع!

Amina and Sara's father accused them of being bad Muslim girls. Making them invisible with my magic lamb mealball recipe was the only way I could save them from his bullets!

I, too, am looking for this recipe. I don't know it, but I did meet a djinn in Pakistan once who does...

أنا أيضاً أبحث عن هذه الوصفة. لكني لا أعرفها، غير أنني قابلت في إحدى المرات جنياً في باكستان يعرف بأمورها.



اتهم والد أمانة وسارة بنتيه بأنهما فتاتين مسلمتين طائشتين. فما كان مني إلا أن جعلتهما خفيتين باستخدام وصفة مصباح كرات اللحم السحري، خاصتي، كانت تلك هي الطريقة الوحيدة لإنقاذ حياتهما من أعيرته النارية.



Come with us to Pakistan. Maybe the djinn there can help you, too.

تعال معنا إلى باكستان. ربما تستطيع الجنية هناك مساعدتك أيضاً.





The simurgh and her cargo make a detour to Turkey before heading to Pakistan.

تتوقف السيمورغ بحمولتها في تركيا قبل إستئناف رحلتها إلى باكستان.



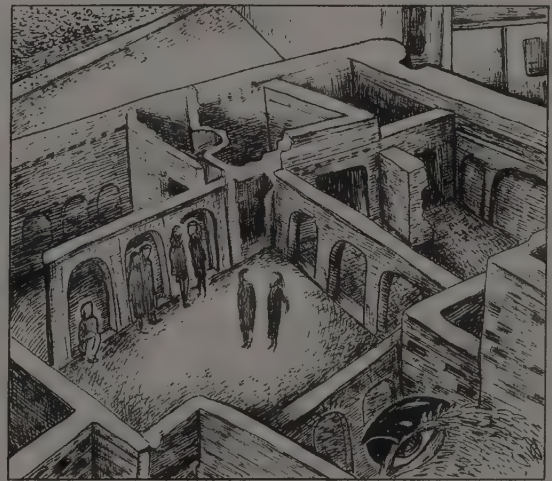
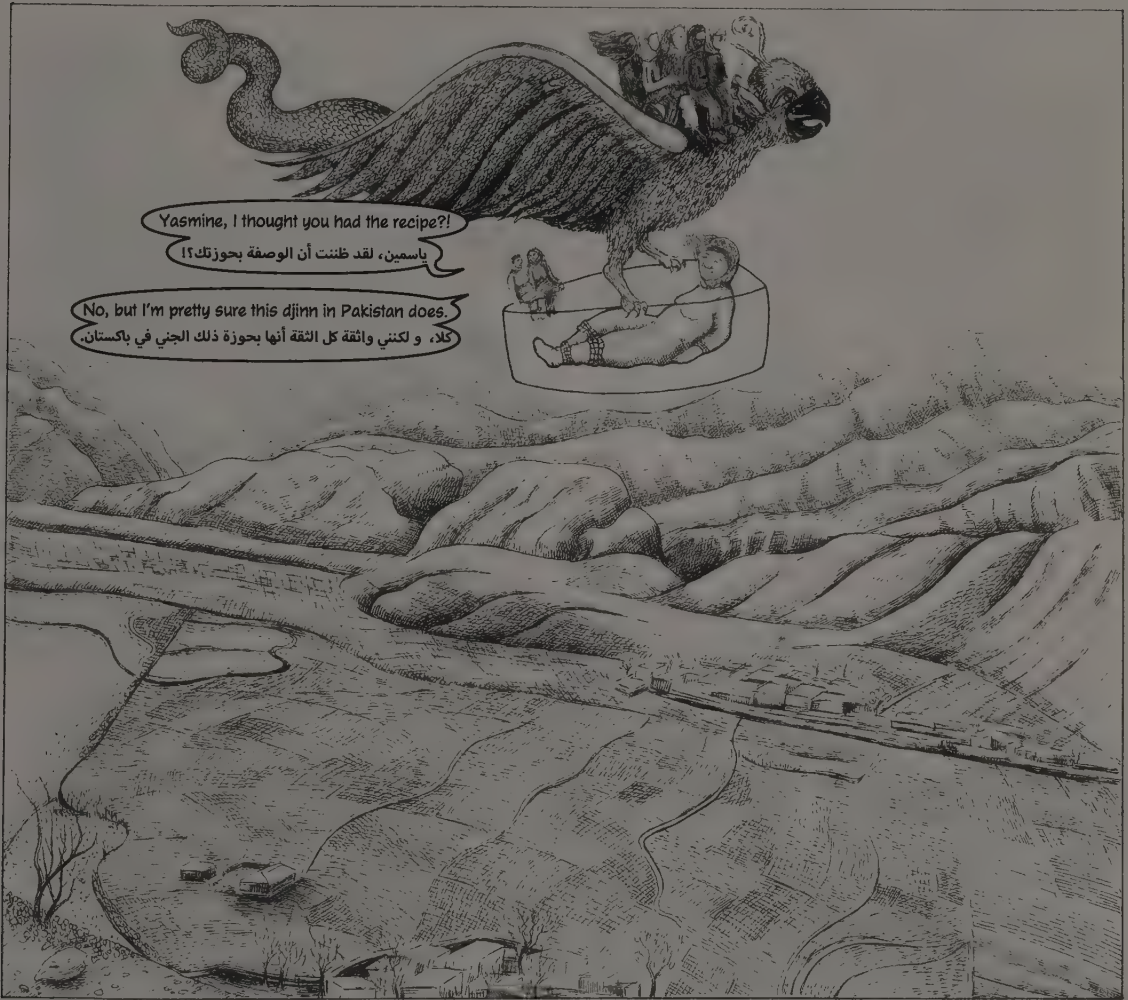
Little Maisa!

ميساء الصغيرة!

Yasmine Djinn!

ياسمين الجنية!





The simurgh descends at a temple ruin in Pakistan. A group of invisible women is gathered here, and...



يحط السيمورغ في حطام أحد المعابد في باكستان. و كان هناك تجمع لنساء غير منظورات، و.....



RABIA?!?

ربيعة؟!

Yasmine, is this the djinn you brought us all this way to see?

ياسمين، هل قطعنا كل هذه المسافة لنرى هذه الجنية؟

Why, yes... You know each other? في الواقع، نعم... هل تعرفان بعضكما بعضاً؟

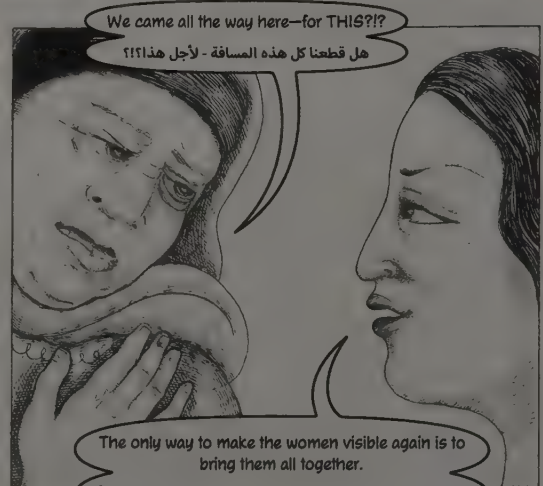
Hello, Rabia, we've come to ask you for the magic recipe that will make women visible again.

مرحباً ربيعة، لقد أتينا لنسألك عن الوصفة السحرية التي تساعد النساء المخفيات على أن يصبحن مرئيات مجدداً.



Magic recipe? There is no magic recipe.

وصفة سحرية؟ لا توجد لدينا وصفة سحرية.



We came all the way here—for THIS?!?

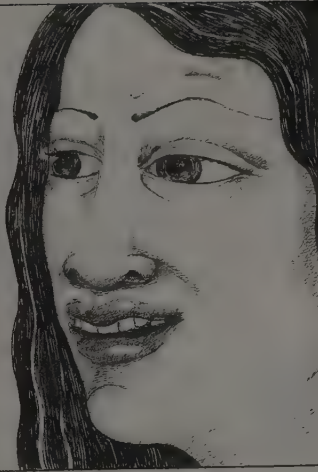
هل قطعنا كل هذه المسافة - لأجل هذا؟!

The only way to make the women visible again is to bring them all together.

الطريقة الوحيدة لجعل النساء مرئيات مجدداً هي بجلهن جميعاً.

The bad Muslim girls must cook the recipes that made them invisible. Sharing all of their magic foods with each other will make them visible once more—to each other and to the world.

على الفتيات المسلمات الطائشات طبخ الوصفات التي جعلتهن غير منظورات، ثم تقاسمها مع بعضهن البعض ليصبحن مرئيات إلى بعضهن أولاً ثم إلى الناس.



And why would we ever trust **YOU** again, after the dirty tricks you've played?!!

Well, haha, you don't really have a choice, do you?

حسنًا، ليس لديكم خيار آخر، هههه، أليس كذلك؟

و لماذا ينبغي علينا أن نثق بك مجدداً، بعد كل تلك الحيل الدنيئة التي مارستها علينا؟؟؟



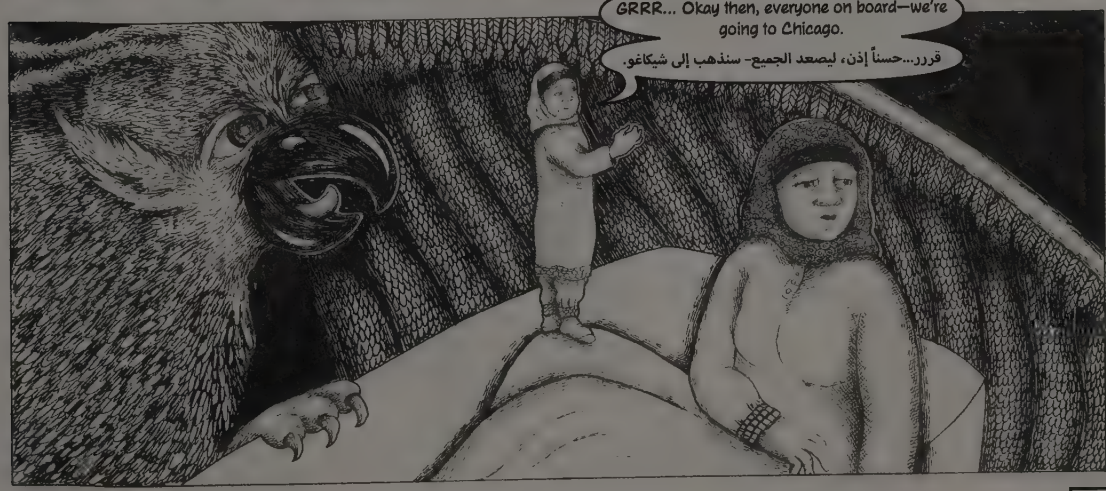
And for that matter, neither do these bad Muslim girls who have come to me: Shirin, Ratima, Nasrin, Aisha, Shamim, Zulekha, and Fatima.

لا بالنسبة لهذه المسألة، ولا بالنسبة لأولئك الفتيات المسلمات الطائشات أمثال شيرين، ورتيمة، ونسرین، وعائشة، وشميم، وزليخا، وفاطمة، اللاتي آتين إلي.



GRRR... Okay then, everyone on board—we're going to Chicago.

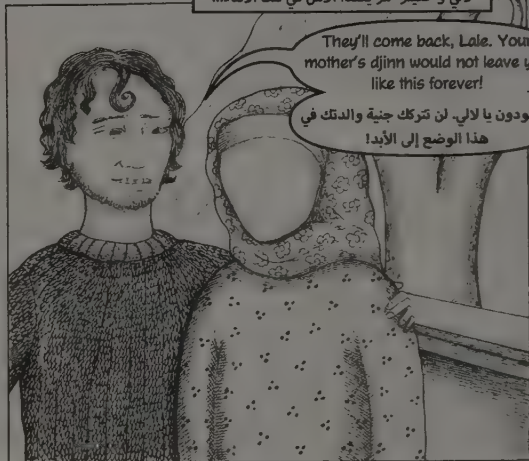
قررر... حسنًا إذن، ليصعد الجميع—سنذهب إلى شيكاغو.





Lale and Hakim, meanwhile, have not given up hope...

لالي و حكيم لم يفقدا الأمل في تلك الأثناء...



They'll come back, Lale. Your mother's djinn would not leave you like this forever!

سيعودون يا لالي. لن تترك جنية والدتك في هذا الوضع إلى الأبد!

Whoa!!! That's the most enormous bird I have ever seen!!

أوووه!! هذا أضخم طائر رأيته في حياتي!



CANAWW

CANAWW

ججججج

Moments later...

بعد لحظات...



Oh, my poor little Lale!
Even invisible, I still know my daughter!

أوه، ابنتي لالي الصغيرة المسكينة! استطيع التعرف عليها حتى ولو كانت خفية!



Maisa!! You're alive???

ميساء هل أنت حية ترزقين؟؟



Yes, when the simurgh
pulled me out of the grave,
I woke up!

نعم، لقد إستيقظت عندما سحبنى
السيمورغ خارج القبر.

All right, enough reminiscing—
you have a lot of cooking to do!

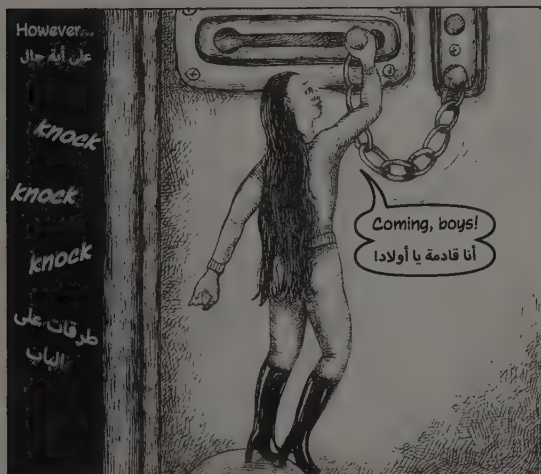
حسناً، يكفي استرجاعاً للذكريات، لديكن
طبخ كثير لتنجزنه!





After many hours of cooking, the group gathers in Lale and Hakim's living room for a big feast. Surprisingly, the rascal Raba Djinn had told them the truth. As the women share their magic foods, each one of them regains her visibility. They laugh and share their stories for hours.

بعد عدة ساعات من القيام بأعمال المطبخ، التأم شمل الجميع في غرفة المعيشة استعداداً للوليمة الكبرى. فجأة اعترفت ربعة الجنية الشريرة بالحقيقة. وفي أثناء تقاسم النساء أطباق الطعام السحري استعادت كل واحدة منهن مرئيتها، وامضين عدة ساعات في الضحك وتبادل الحكايات.



Uncle Omar, Ali and Yassir make their entrance. Hilarity erupts at the sight of their ridiculous forms.



(سورة
الشورى 24)

QUR'AN SURAH 42

42:40 The recompense for an injury is an injury equal thereto (in degree); but if a person forgives and makes reconciliation, his or her reward is due from Allah: for (Al-lah) loveth not those who do wrong.

42:41 But indeed if any do help and defend themselves after a wrong (done) to them, against such there is no cause of blame.

42:42 The blame is only against those who oppress others with wrong-doing and insolently transgress beyond bounds through the land, defying right and justice: for such there will be a penalty grievous.

42:43 But indeed if any show patience and forgive, that would truly be an exercise of courageous will and resolution in the conduct of affairs.

(وَجَزَاء سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِّثْلُهَا فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ) (40) وَلَمَنْ اتَّخَذَ يُدَّ ظَلْمِهِ قَاوِلًا مَّا عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ سَبِيلٍ (41) إِنَّمَا السَّبِيلُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَظْلِمُونَ النَّاسَ وَيَتْلِفُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بَغْيَ الْحَقِّ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (42) وَلَمَنْ ضَرَبَ وَغَرَزَ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَمِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ (43)

In the spirit of the QUR'AN, and because she is compassionate and kind, Maisa serves the remorseful men tea from the samovar that Omar had once hurled at Lale and her in blind fury.



بروح القرآن
المتسامحة، ولأنها رحيمة
وعظوفة، فقد قامت
ميساء بصب الشاي إلى
الرجال الذين تأكلهم
الندم، من نفس الابريق
الذي كان عمر قد قذفها
هي ولالي به في إحدى
فورات غضبه.

This act of forgiveness restores the men's shapes. But each retains one beastly feature as a permanent reminder of the demons that forever lurk beneath the surface...

صنيع المسامحة هذا ساعد الرجال على استعادة أشكالهم الطبيعية. لكن احتفظ كل واحد منهم
بواحدة من الميزات كي تظل بمثابة تذكار أبدي على الشرور الكامنة...



And they celebrate late into the night—good Muslim girls, women, men, and djinns, all together.

ثم إحتفل الجميع - الفتيات المسلمات الطيبات، والنساء والرجال والجنيون إلى وقت متأخر من الليل.



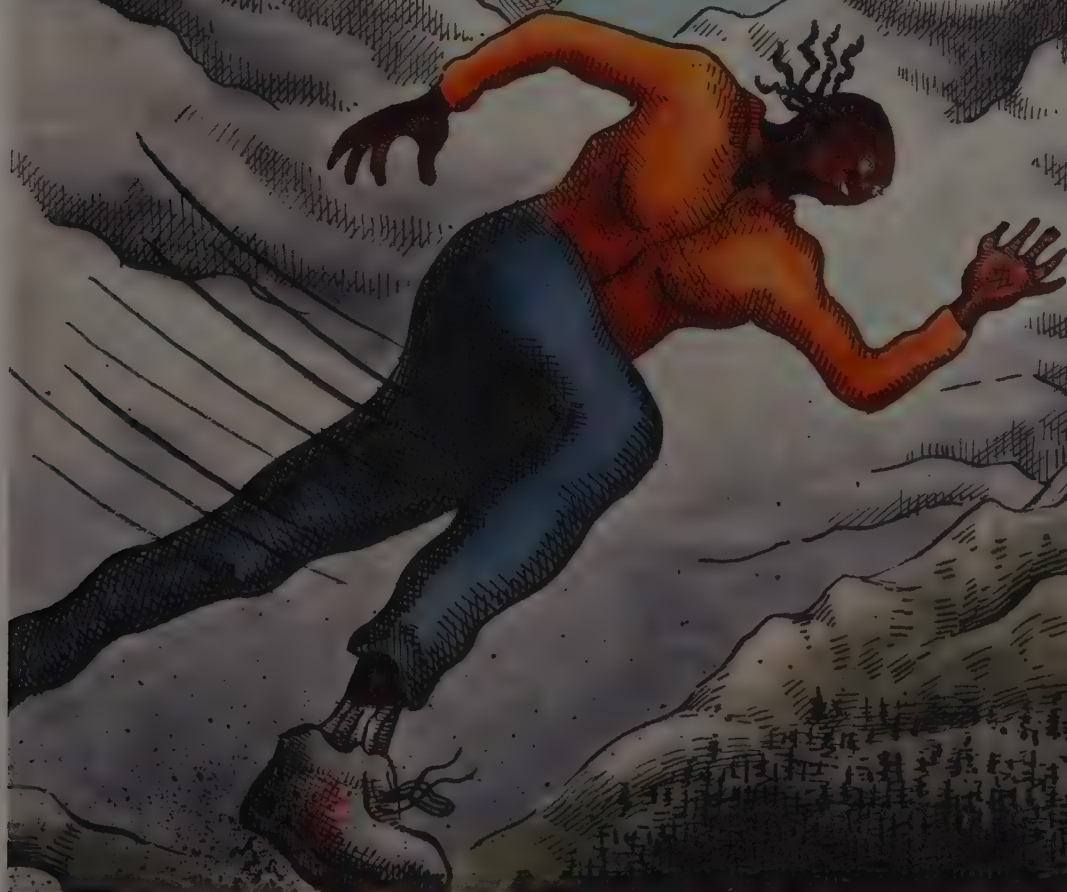




Mumbi & the Long Run

Mumbi Na Mbiyo Za Masafa Marefu

Swahili translation by David Opiyo



Introduction

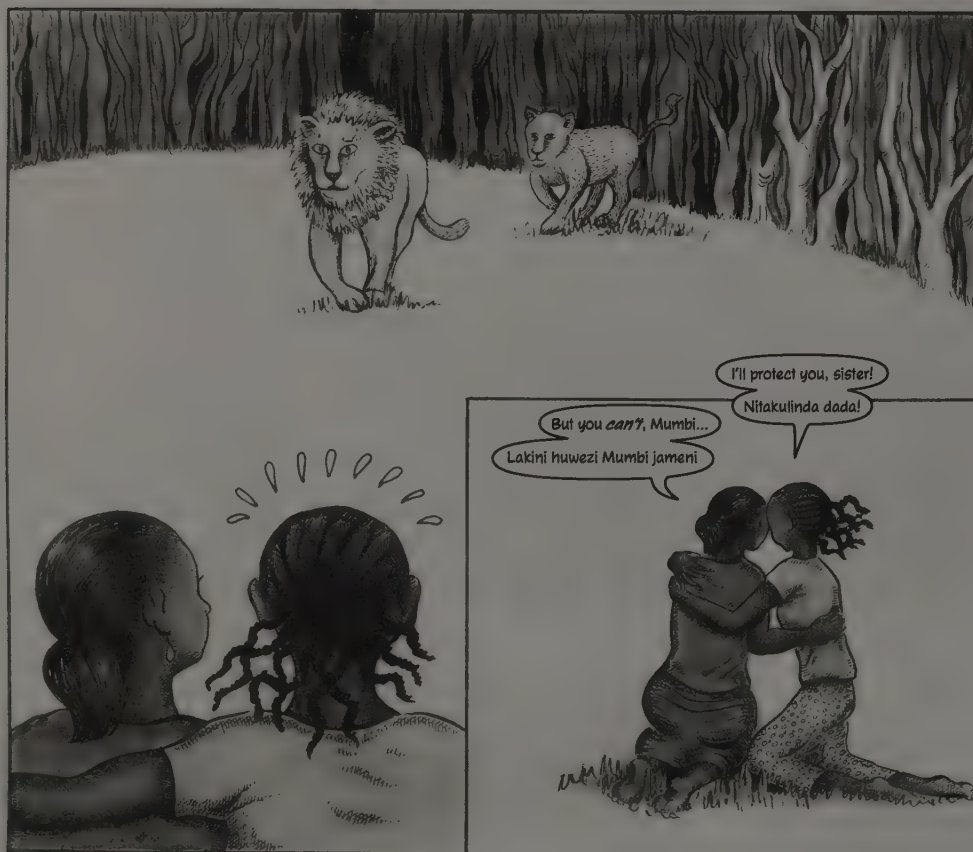
Helen Concannon

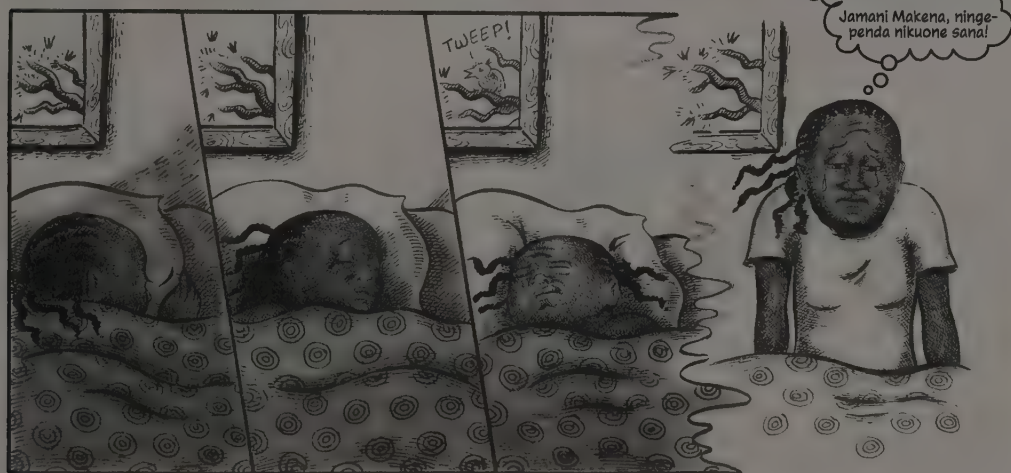
While researching for creative ways of presenting the sensitive topic of female circumcision, I came across Maureen Burdock and her innovative *F Word Project*. When I contacted her she was mid-writing “Mumbi & the Long Run” and I was immediately captured by her passion and innovation in addressing the taboo subject of female circumcision.

Having worked with the women of Londiani, Kenya, I had been privileged to hear their stories, listen to their histories and learn about this deep-rooted cultural practice from their communities. Working in partnership with the communities, Friends of Londiani developed an Alternative Rite of Passage like the one described by Mumbi. It's accepted locally by the communities because they helped design it, taking into account the research from other organizations. The ARP incorporates all the traditional teachings and cultural sharing that the traditional circumcision does, except it does it without any cutting and therefore no health risks. When I read Mumbi and saw how Maureen had intertwined so many important topics together, I loved how this simulated the reality facing young girls and women around the world. Everything is interconnected—circumcision, early marriage, education, health. Maureen has brought these important life choices to us through the wonderful medium of the comic book, making it an educational tool for girls to read and learn through.

I commend Maureen for her inspiration to use graphic art to address some of the important issues facing girls and women in today's world. It's not only Mumbi who has courage, Maureen has also shown courage in highlighting an Alternative Rite of Passage which is a successful way of changing one of our cultural practices.

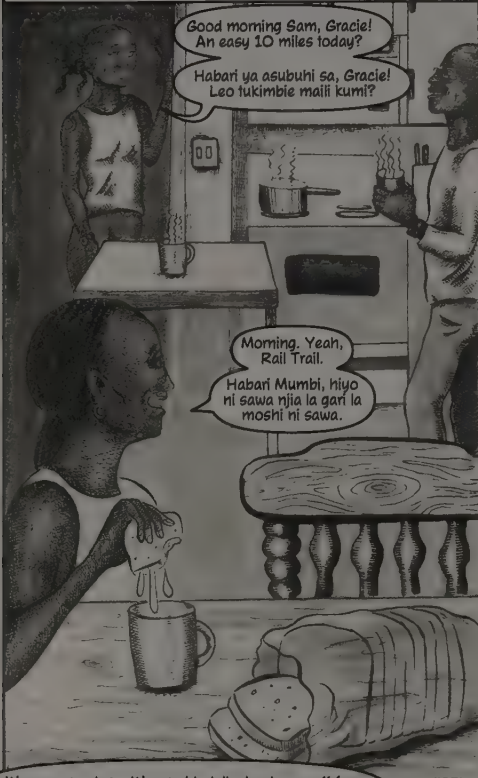






Moments after waking from her dream, Mumbi hops out of bed, not wanting to dwell on sad memories. She steps into the kitchen, where she finds her housemates already enjoying chai and bread.

Masaa fupi baada ya kuamuka, kutoka ndoto yake, Mumbi yuaruka toka kifanda yake kwa vile hataki kufikiria makaye yaliopita kutoka chimba cha kulala, mumbi alielekea jikoni ambapo alikutana wenzake wanaoburudika na kiamshakingwa ya chai kwa mkate.



Good morning Sam, Gracie!
An easy 10 miles today?

Habari ya asubuhi sa, Gracie!
Leo tukimbie maili kumi?

Morning. Yeah,
Rail Trail.

Habari Mumbi, hiyo
ni sawa njia la gari la
moshi ni sawa.

We were so close. We used to talk about *everything*.
She was so beautiful, too, all soft and round and lovely.

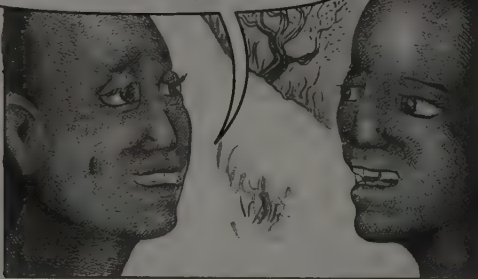
Tulipendana sana, kati yetu tuliongea bila kuficha lolote. Alikuwa mrembo piya, ngozi Nyororo na umbo linayofurahisha sana.

Yeah, of course. Even though she used to tease
me that my hair sticks out like electrical wires!

Kweli jameni uingawa alikuwa ananitumia ati Nywele
yangu yamesimama kama miti ya waya za stima!

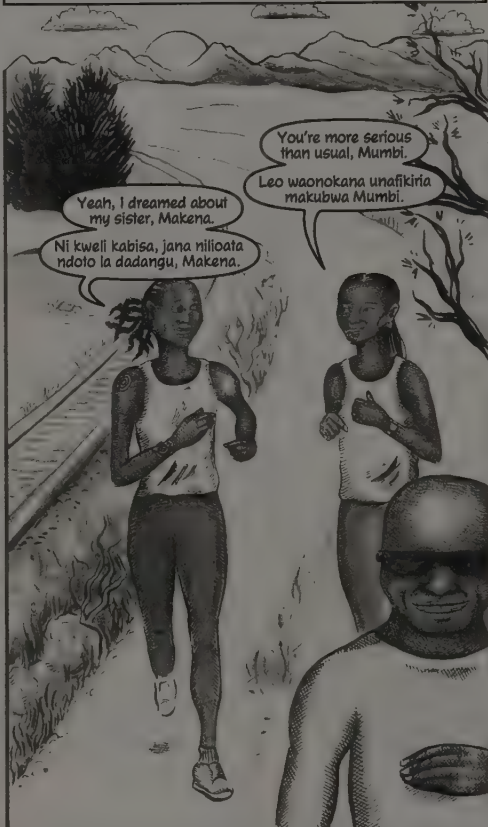
You miss her a *lot*, don't you...

Unamfikiria sana. Siviyo...



A short while later, the three runners are on Santa Fe's Rail Trail, warming up in the brisk hour before dawn.

Masaa fupi baadaye, Hawa wanariadha watatu waelekea njia la reli ya Santa Fe, ote kwa hewa safi la asubui.



Yeah, I dreamed about
my sister, Makena.
Ni kweli kabisa, jana nilioata
ndoto la dadangu, Makena.

You're more serious
than usual, Mumbi.

Leo waonokana unafikiria
makubwa Mumbi.

Well it *does*!
Na ni kweli tena!

Stick out like wires!
Waya ya stima!

Does what?!

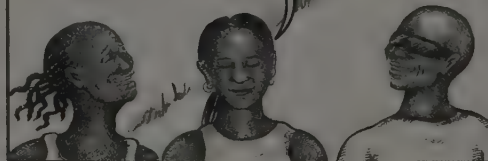
Ukweli gani?!

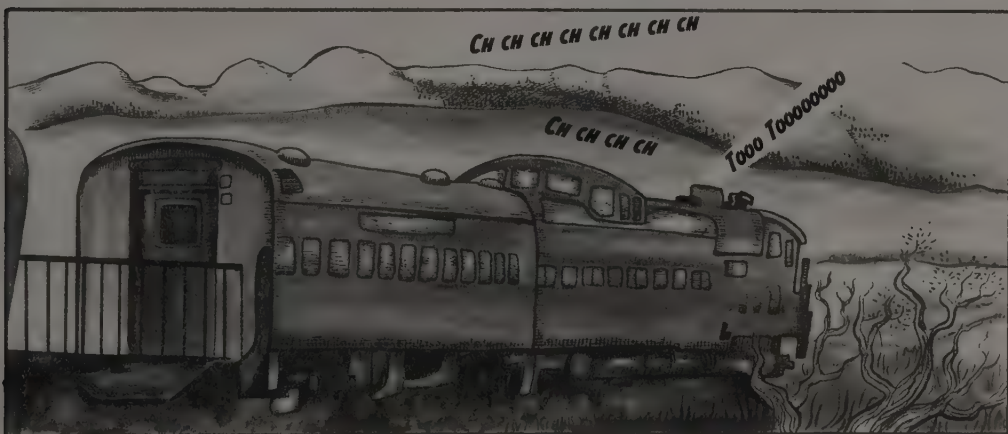
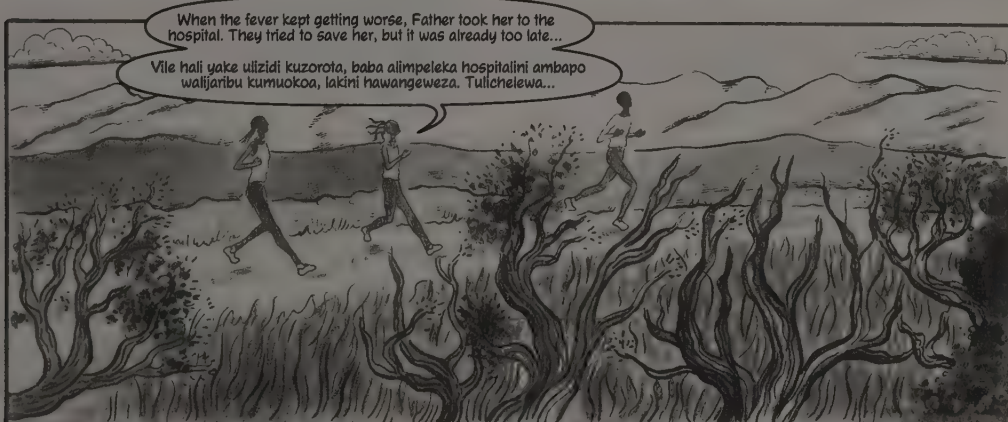
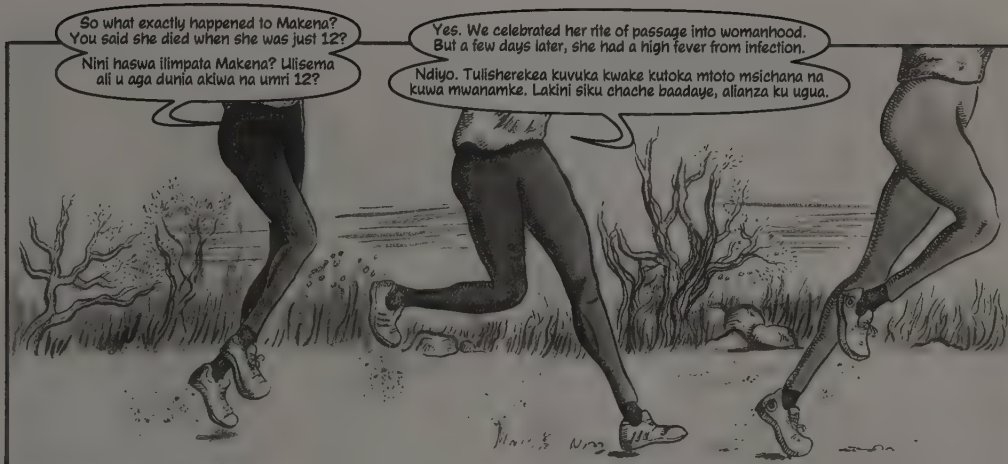
Not *you*, too!

Siyo Nawe pia!

Like brother and sister, you two!

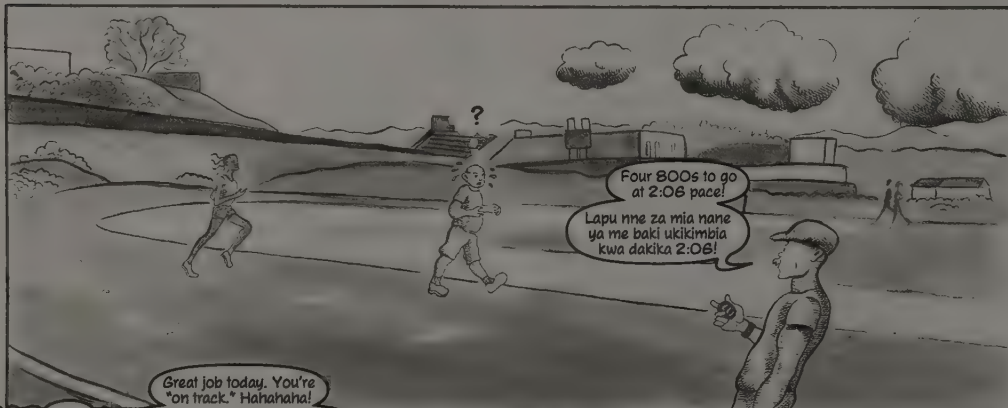
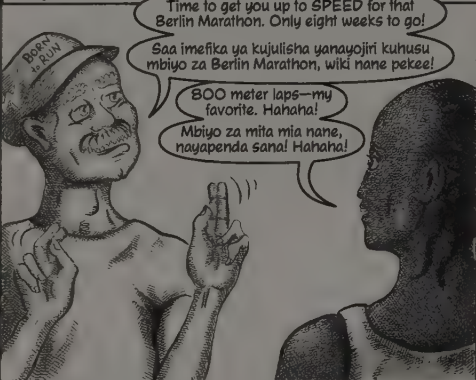
Nyingi wawili ni ndugu na dada!



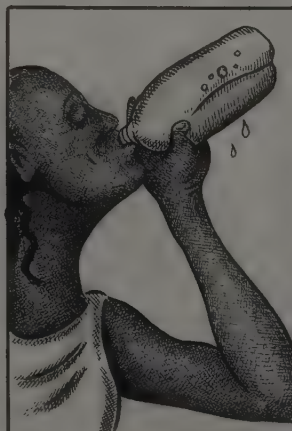
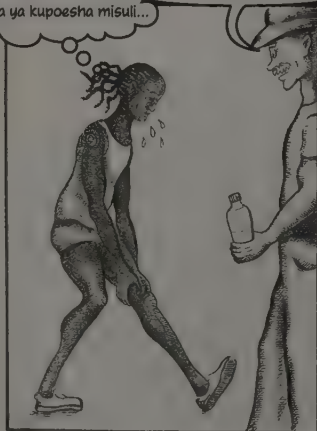


Later that day, Mumbi meets Dustin, her manager, at the high school track.

Baadaye siku hiyo, Mumbi alikutana na Dustin, Meneja wake, kwenye uwanja wa shule.



Time for a massage... Nisaa ya kupoesha misuli...



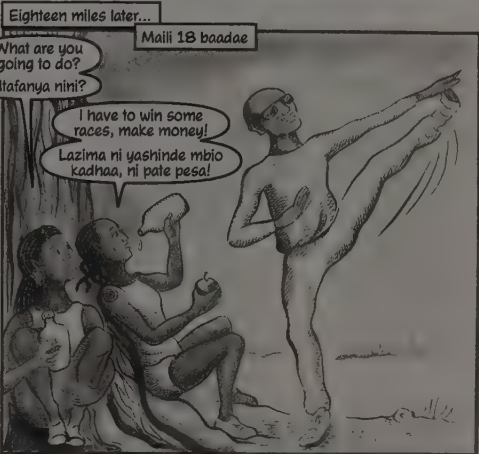
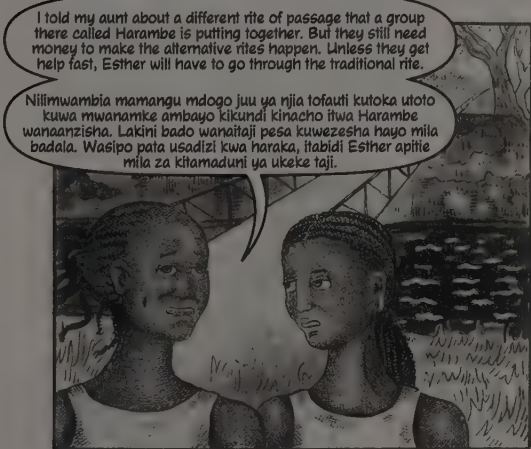
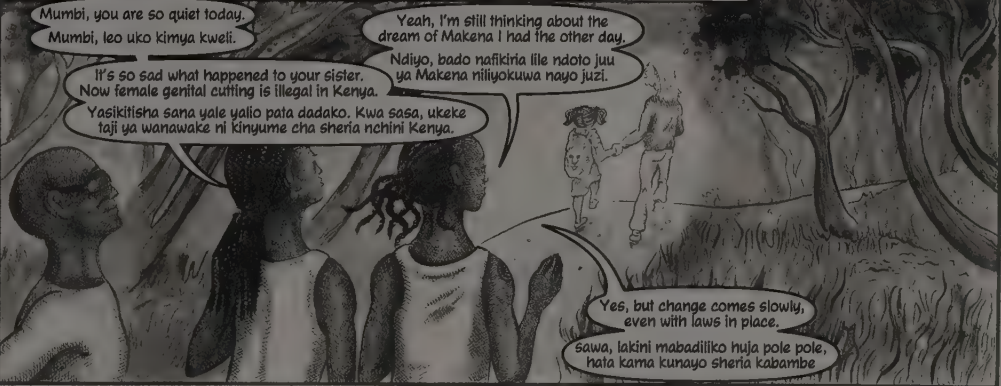
The following morning, Mumbi, Sam, and Gracie catch a train down to Albuquerque.

Kesho yake, Mumbi, Sam na Gracie wapanda wote gari la moshni wakielekea Albuquerque.



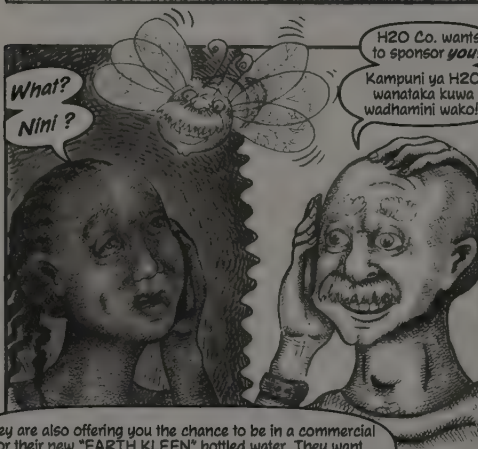
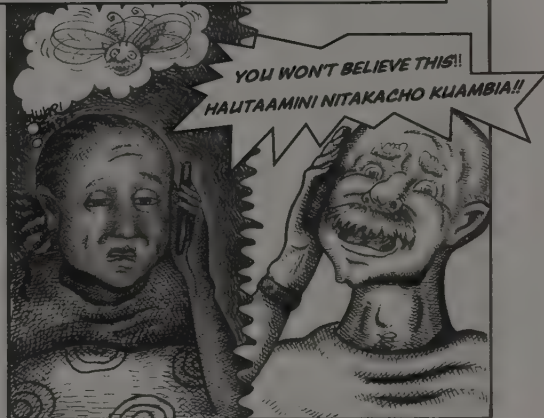
A while later, the friends arrive at the Bosque and begin warming up.

Dakika chache badaye, marafiki zao wafika kwenye. Busaye ambapo wote wanza kukimbia kunyoosha misuli.



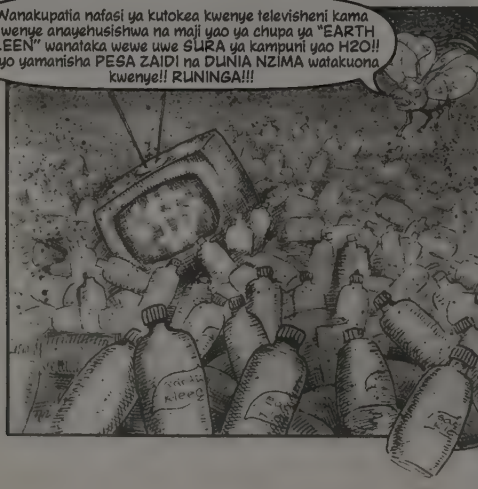
Back in Santa Fe, Mumbi takes a much needed siesta. She has just fallen into a deep sleep when her phone starts buzzing.

Kule Santa fe, Mumbi anajilaza akufurahiya mapumziko. Punde anapoanza kulala kabisa ndipo simu yake yaanza kulala.



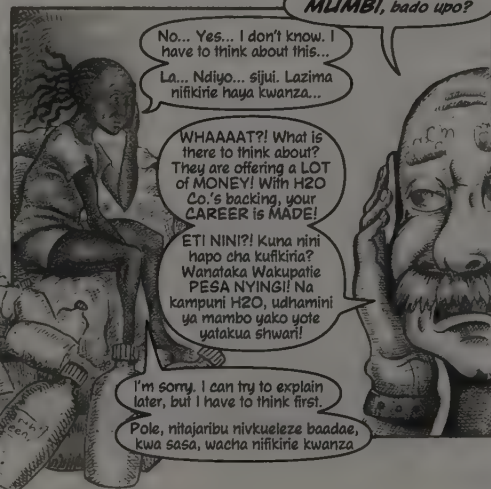
They are also offering you the chance to be in a commercial for their new "EARTH KLEEN" bottled water. They want YOU to be the FACE of H2O Co.!! That means even MORE money!! AND THE WHOLE WORLD will see you on TV!!

Wanakupatia nafasi ya kutoka kwenye televisheni kama mwenye anayehusishwa na maji yao ya chupa ya "EARTH KLEEN" wanataka wewe uwe SURU ya kampuni yao H2O!! Hiyo yamanisha PESA ZAIDI na DUNIA NZIMA watakuona kwenye!! RUNINGA!!!



MUMBI, are you still there?

MUMBI, bado upo?





Brought us some drumsticks!
Limetununulia miguu ya kuku!

How come so gloomy, Mumbi?
Mbona huna raha mumbi?

I just got a call from Dustin.
Nimetoka kupokea simu kutoka Dutini.

This is AMAZING! Why aren't you sooo HAPPY??

Ya kushangaza haya! Basi mbona huna raha ya kupindukia?

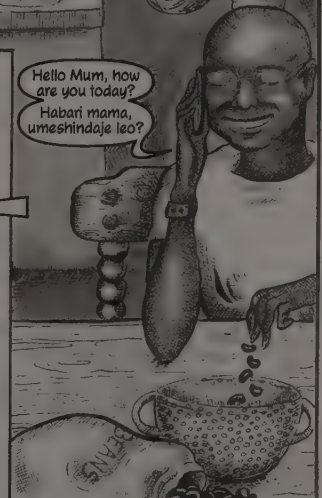
H2O Co. wants to sponsor me and put me in their ads...

Kampuni ya H2O wanataka kuwa wadhamini wangu na kunjweka kama sura ya kampuni...

WHAAAT?! ETI NINI?!

Hello Mum, how are you today?

Habari mama, umeshindaje leo?

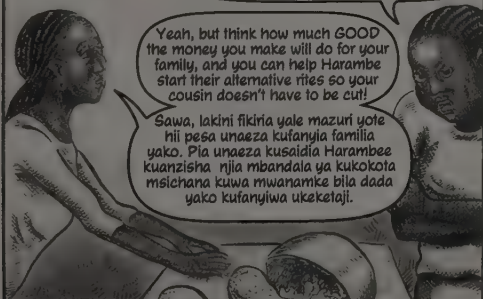


If it were a more ethical company and not THIS one, I would be sooo happy right now. But H2O Co. has done SO MUCH DAMAGE to people in Africa and around the world.*

Kama kungekua na kampuni nyingine yenye utu na siyo hi, ningekua na hiyo raha lakini kampuni. Ya H2O inafanya madhara mengi sana kwa watu wa afrika kote duniani.

Yeah, but think how much GOOD the money you make will do for your family, and you can help Harambe start their alternative rites so your cousin doesn't have to be cut!

Sawa, lakini fikiria yale mazuri yote hii pesa unaeza kutayilia familia yako. Pia unaeza kusaidia Harambee kuanzisha njia mbandala ya kukokota msichana kuwa mwanamke bila dada yako kutanyiwa ukekataji.

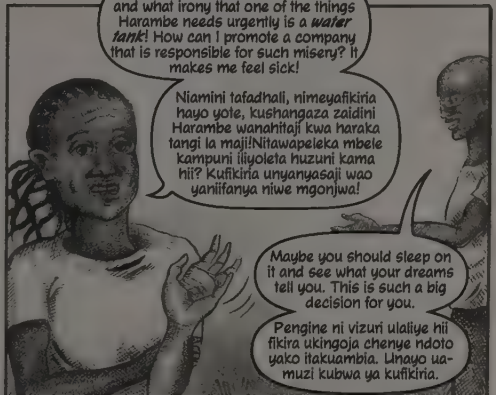


Believe me, I've thought of all that, and what irony that one of the things Harambe needs urgently is a *water tank*! How can I promote a company that is responsible for such misery? It makes me feel sick!

Niamini tafadhali, nimeyafikiria hayo yote, kushangaza zaidini Harambe wanahitaji kwa haraka tangi la maji! Nitawapeleka mbele kampuni iliyoleta huzuni kama hii? Kufikiria unyanayasaji wao yaniifanya niwe mgonjwa!

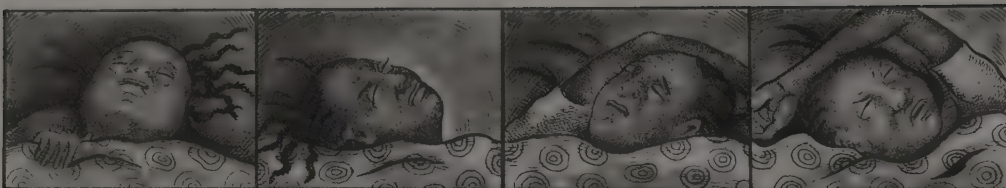
Maybe you should sleep on it and see what your dreams tell you. This is such a big decision for you.

Pengine ni vizuri ulatiye hii fikira ukingoja chenye ndoto yako itakuambia. Unayo uamuzi kubwa ya kufikiria.



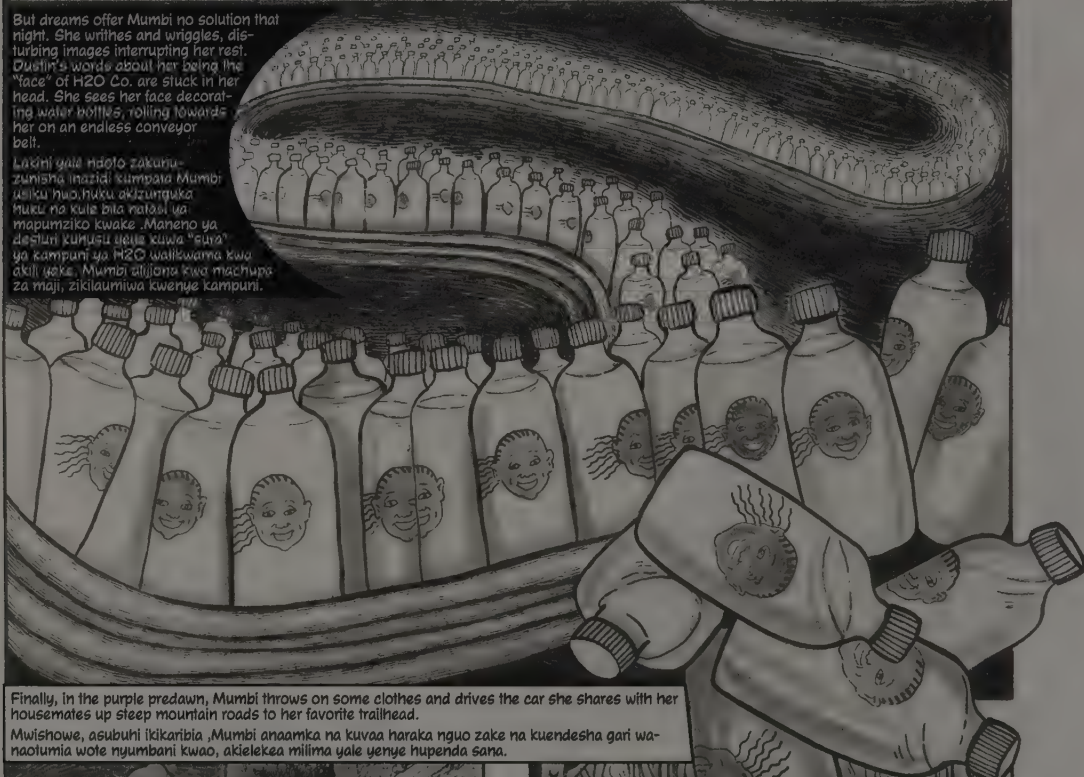
*A certain international corporation pushed their baby formula on nursing moms who didn't have clean water to mix it with, so the babies were dying from diarrhea they never would've gotten from their mums' milk. But the corporation didn't care! And now they're tapping water from communities without their consent, and reselling it in bottles for 2000% profit! Check out the boycott of such a corporation by athletes at the 2012 London Olympics.

*Kunayo kampuni Fulani ya kimataifa iliyo lazimisha formula ya watoto kwenye wamama wenye watoto wachanga waliyokosa maji safi ya kupachanganya hayo sababu hiyo ilifanya watoto wachanga waanze kuhara na kufariki, hayo hayangendelea kama wengine shwa kwa majiwa ya mama ya kusikilisha ni hii kampuni haliujali! Na sasa wanataka maji kutoka wananchi bila idhini yao na kuweka kwenye chupa na kuajauza tena na kupata faida zaidi ya 2000%. Angalia vile wanafadha hawakushangilia kampuni hicho michezo za olimpiki kule uingereza mwaka wa 2012.



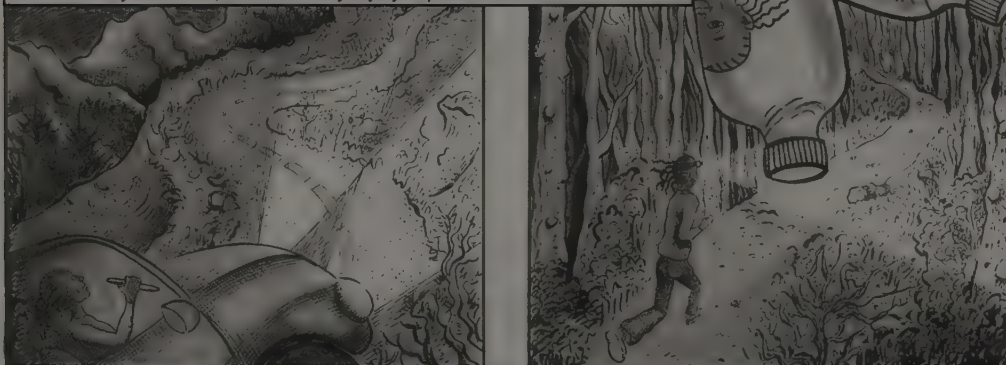
But dreams offer Mumbi no solution that night. She writhes and wriggles, disturbing images interrupting her rest. Dustlin's words about her being the "face" of H2O Co. are stuck in her head. She sees her face decorating water bottles, rolling towards her on an endless conveyor belt.

Lakini gata ndoto zakunizunisha inazidi kumpata Mumbi asiku huo, huku akizunguka huku na kula bila malasi ya mapumziko kwake. Maneno ya dustlin kumpasa kwake "face" ya kampuni ya H2O walikuwama kwa akili yake. Mumbi alijiona kwa machupa za maji, zikilaumiwa kwenye kampuni.



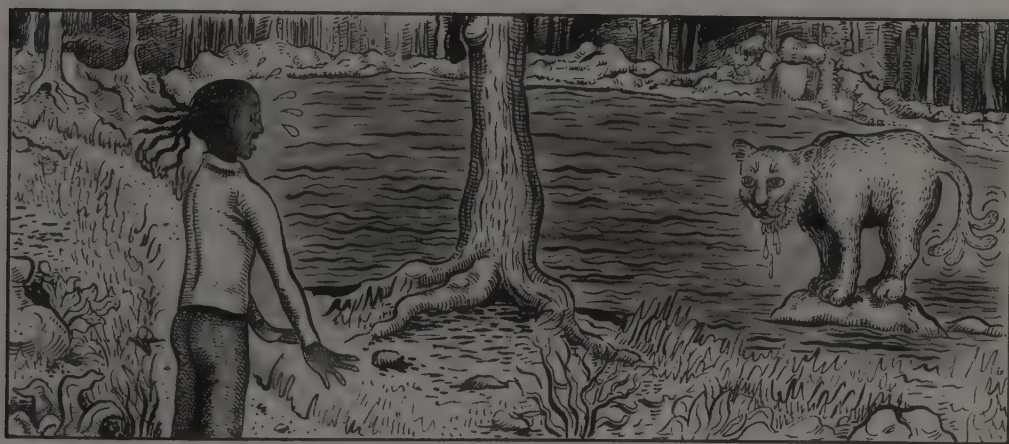
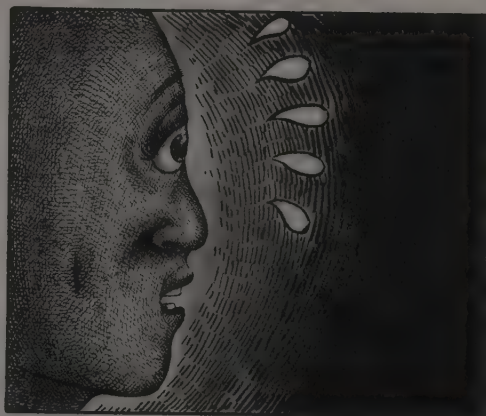
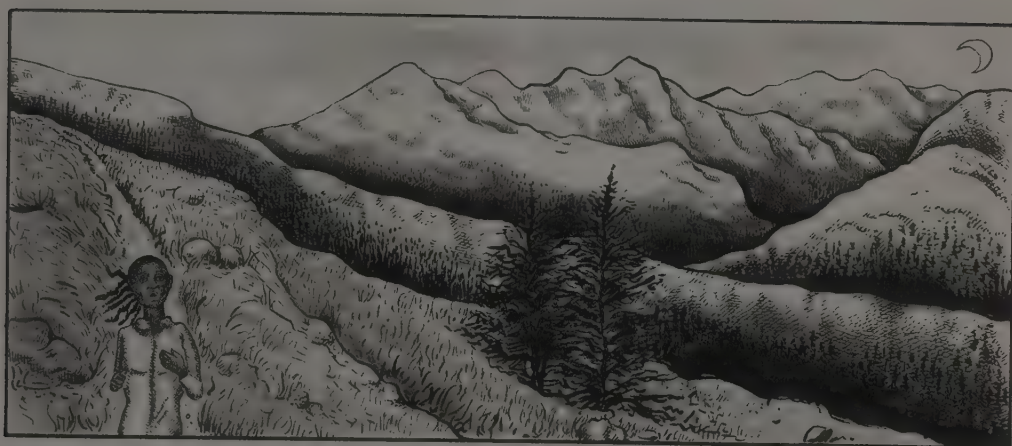
Finally, in the purple predawn, Mumbi throws on some clothes and drives the car she shares with her housemates up steep mountain roads to her favorite trailhead.

Mwishowe, asubuhi ikikaribia, Mumbi anaamka na kuvaa haraka nguo zake na kuendesha gari wa-naotumia wote nyumbani kwao, akielekea milima yale yenye hupenda sana.



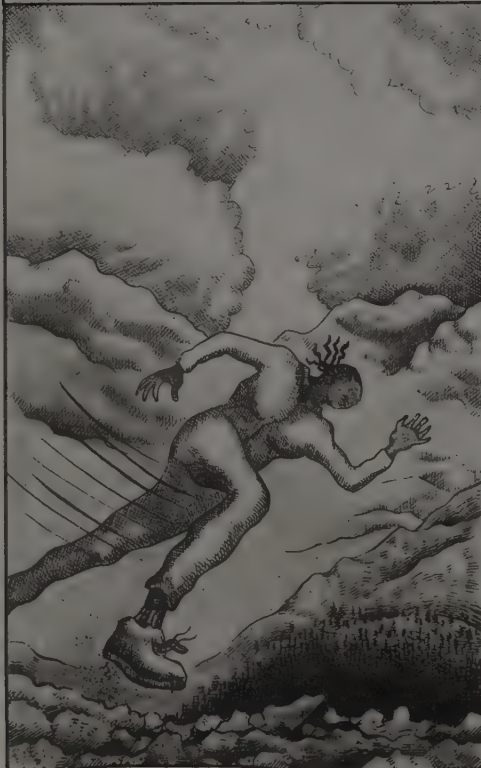
As Mumbi begins to climb, the bright beam of her headlamp illuminates roots and rocks along the trail. She hopes it will frighten away any predators, as well. Running alone in the wilderness, especially at night, is not something she would normally do, but this is the best way she can think of to clear her mind.

Vile Mumbi ananza kupanda milima, mataa za gari yakimulika mawe za milima na matawi hapo anadhamia atawafukuza walio na nia mbaya. Kukimbia pekeyake huko milimani siyo kitu anaweza kufanya pekeyake, lakini hapa ndiyo mafikira zake hutulia kiamara akikimbiya hapa.



Mumbi has never in her life run as fast as she is running down the trail now, after seeing the mountain lion. But despite—or maybe because of—the shock she's just had, everything is suddenly very clear to her.

Mumbi hajawai kukimbia kwa kasi vile anavyokimbia leo, baada ya kuona jumba anayopatikana milimani. Lakini licha ya, ama kwasababu ya, ile mshtuko aliyopata kwa kuona simba, yale yote hayangeona, sasa yamemulikwa.



Yes, I have decided. I'm sorry, but I won't be the face of H2O Co. Ndio, nimeamua. Pole lakini sitakua "sura" la kampuni ya H2O.

I will just have to make sure I place in Berlin. Ya bidi nipate nafasi kwa mkondo wa Berlin.

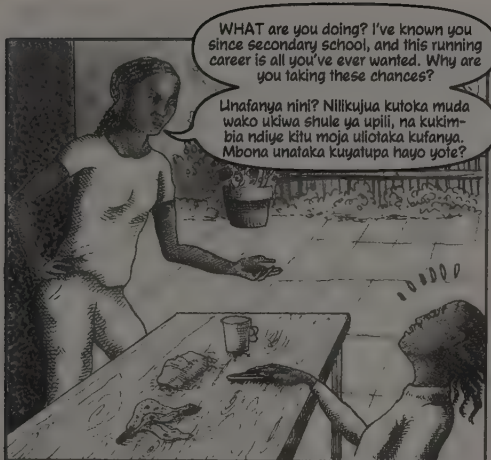
Please don't call me "Kiddo." I am almost 30 years old. Tafadhali usiniite mwanako, mimi nakaribia miaka 30.

WHAAAAA?!? YOU ARE THROWING AWAY YOUR CAREER! I'M SURE YOU COULD USE THIS MONEY, AND I SURE WOULD HAVE LOVED HAVING MY PERCENTAGE OF IT! I WORK HARD FOR YOU! Please reconsider...

ETI NINI?!? UNATUPILIA MBALI MAISHA YAKO! NINAYO UHAKIKA HII PESA INAEZA KUFAA, NAMI PIA NINGEPATA YA KWANGU KUTOKA HAPO! MIMI HUTIA BIDI! KWA AJILI YAKO! Tafadhali fikiria tena...

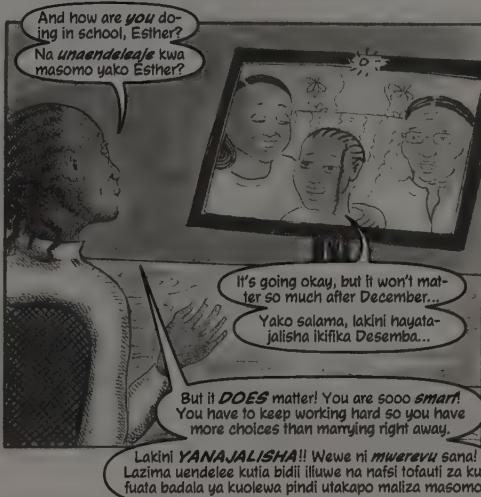
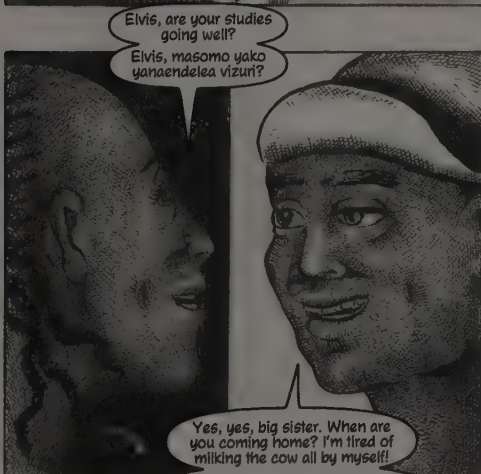
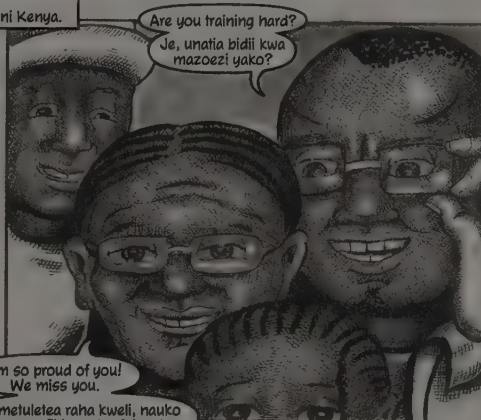
You're good, and you've been improving, but you and I both know Berlin's a *long shot*, kiddo.

Wewe ni mzuri, naumeendelea kuimarika lakini mimi na wewe sole tunafaa Berlin ni "kufikiria mbali sana" mwanangu.



A short while later, Mumbi video calls her family in Kenya.

Muda mfupi baadae, Mumbi awasiliana kwa njia ya picha na familia yake nchini Kenya.



Njoke, have you talked with Elizabeth at the Harambe Foundation about alternative rites of passage?

Njoki, umeongea na Elizabeth wa (foundation) chama cha Harambee kuhusu njia nyingine lisilo ukeketaji?

Yes... but they don't know how they'll have enough money for the water tank and dormitories to be ready before this December school holiday.

Ndio... lakini hawajui kama wataweza kusanya pesa zakutosha ili wanunue tangi la maji na kujenga mabweni mapya kabla muda wa likizo la desemba kufika



These days, the girls want to be running *wild* if they aren't circumcised, chasing boys and getting into trouble! I want this one to be *responsible*.

Siku hizi huwa wasichana hukosa mwelekeo wasipo pitia hichi kitendo cha mila, kaziyoa nikufuatana na vijanana kupata shida! Nataka huyu awe msichana anaye *jifahamu*.

We didn't have Mumbi cut after what happened to Makena.

Hatukumwelekeza Mumbi akeketwe baada ya kilehomendekaa Makena

Yes, well, but *you and I* survived, didn't we?

Kweli lakini mimi na wewe tulipitia na kutatoka vizuri sivyo?

Surely Esther will make responsible choices without having this terrible injury inflicted on her.

Esther bado ataweza kuwa msichana mwenye utu wa uzima hata bila kupata fikira mbaya kama hii.

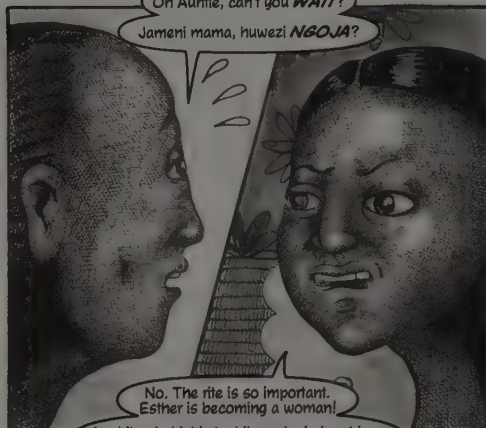


Auntie, look at *me!* I'm not running *wild*, just *fast*!

Mama, niangalie *mimi*! Mbiyo yangu siyo ya kukosa fahamu, nakwambia kwa mwendo wakasitu!

Oh Auntie, can't you *WAIT*?

Jameni mama, huwezi *NGOJA*?



No. The rite is so important. Esther is becoming a woman!

La, kitendo hichi cha kitamaduni ni muhimu kabisa, Esther anageuka kuwa mwanamke!

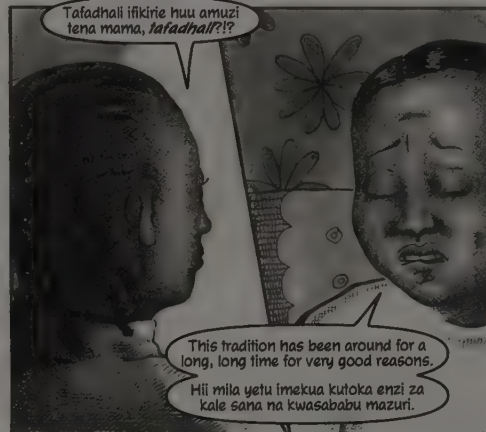
I really wish you'd reconsider...

Natamani sana hungedilisha fikira zako...



Please think about it Auntie, *please*??

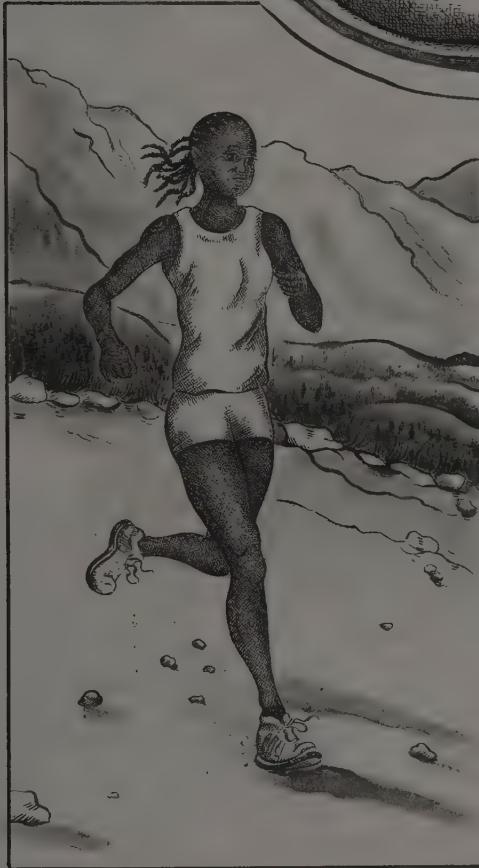
Tafadhali ifikirie huu amuzi tena mama, *tafadhali*??



This tradition has been around for a long, long time for very good reasons. Hii mila yetu imekua kutoka enzi za kale sana na kwasababu mazuri.

After the talk with her family, Mumbi knows what she must do. She has made a tough decision, and now her direction is as clear as the new day she wakes up to the following morning. She must train hard—harder than ever before in her life.

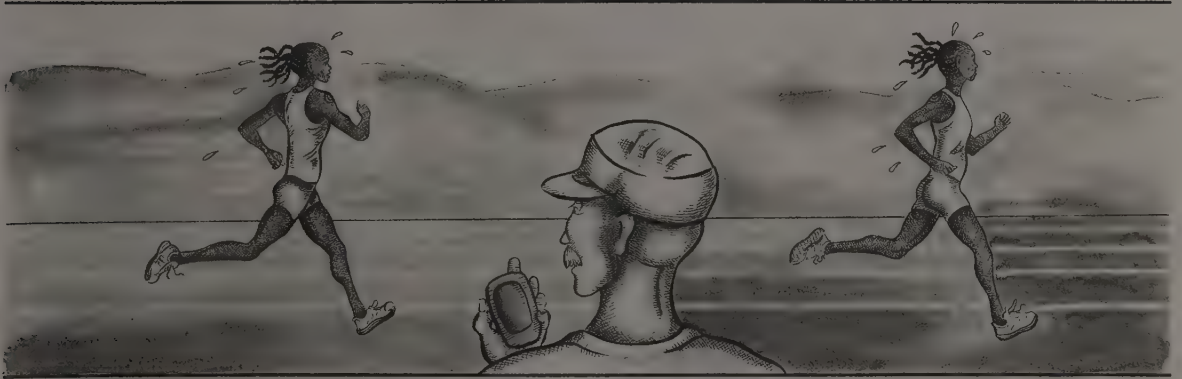
Baada yakuongea na familia yake, Mumbi sasa anafahamu ile tazuma afanye. Amefikia uamuzi kuwa na sasa njia yake umejitokeza kama uhabikika kama siku mpya anayoamukia kesho. Lazima afanye zoezi zaidi, akiweka bidii kushinda siku zingine zote amewahi kufanya mazoezi.

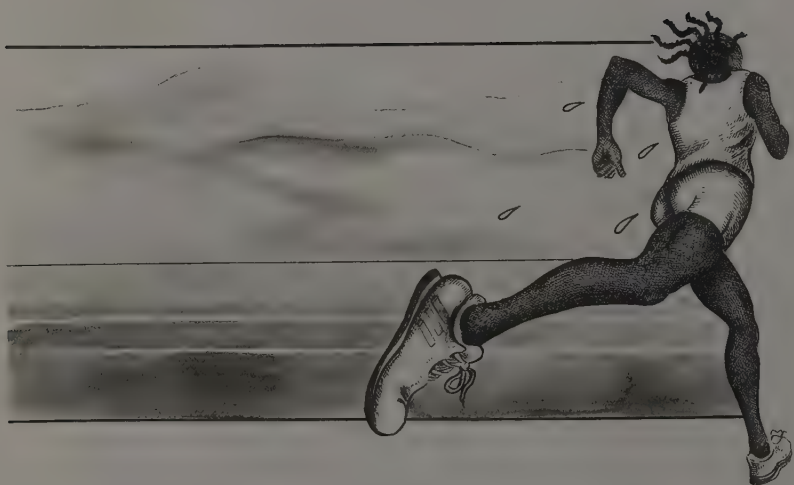


Mumbi puts everything she has into it. She charges up and down steep mountains to build leg strength and endurance, and tears up the local running track to increase her speed. She averages more than 80 miles per week over the next few weeks.

Mumbi anaweka yote anayo kwenye anachotaka kutimiza, akipanda na kushuka mlima kufunga nguvu yake na uvumilivu wa mwili wake. kuongeza mwendo wake waukasi. anafikia maili 80 kwa wiki muda huu.







Finally, the day of departure arrives. Mumbi, Sam, and Dustin take the train down to the Albuquerque Sunport. Mwishowe, siku yake ya safari umefika. Mumbi, Sam, na musuu wote wanapanda gari la mishi kuelekea Albuquerque Sumpore.



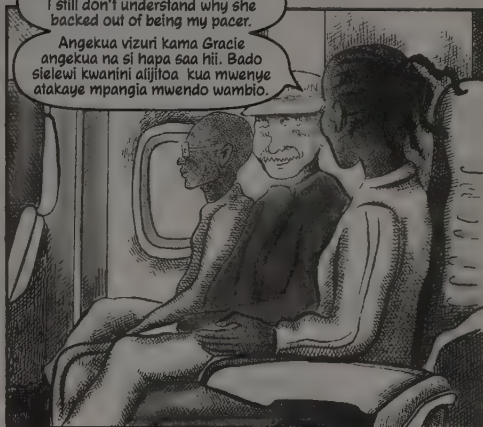
Maybe it has something to do with you making rash, poor decisions.

Pengine ni kwa sababu yako kufikia uamuzi zako kwa haraka bila fikira timamu.



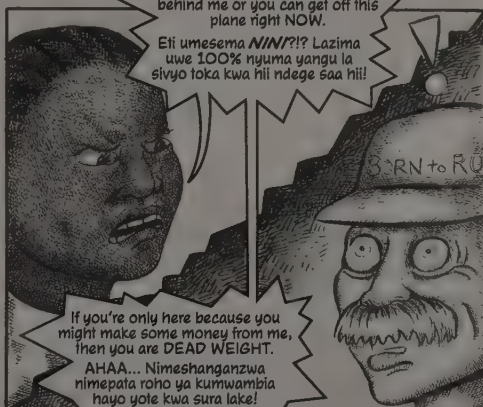
Gracie should be here with us now. I still don't understand why she backed out of being my pacer.

Angekua vizuri kama Gracie angekua na si hapa saa hii. Bado sielewi kwanini alijitoka kua mwenye atakaye mpangia mwendo wambio.



WHAT did you say?!? Dustin, you need to be 100% behind me or you can get off this plane right NOW.

Eti umesema *NN*?!!? Lazima uwe 100% nyuma yangu la siyoyoka kwa hii ndege saa hii!

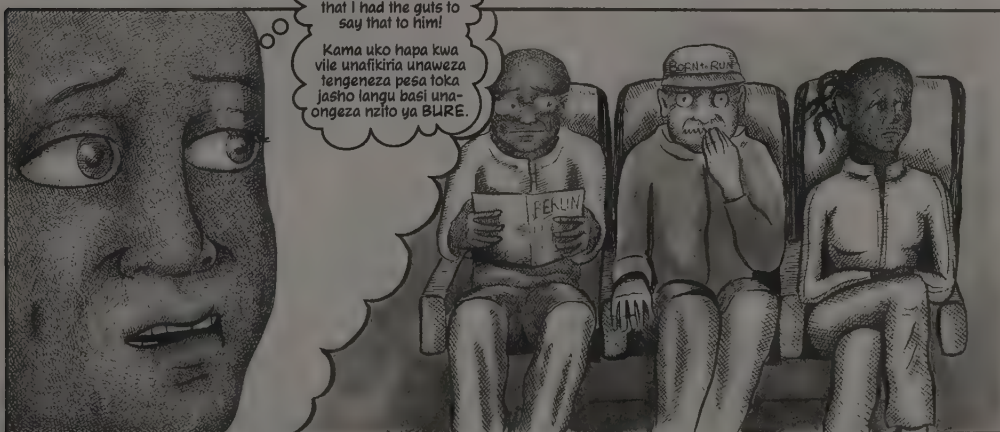


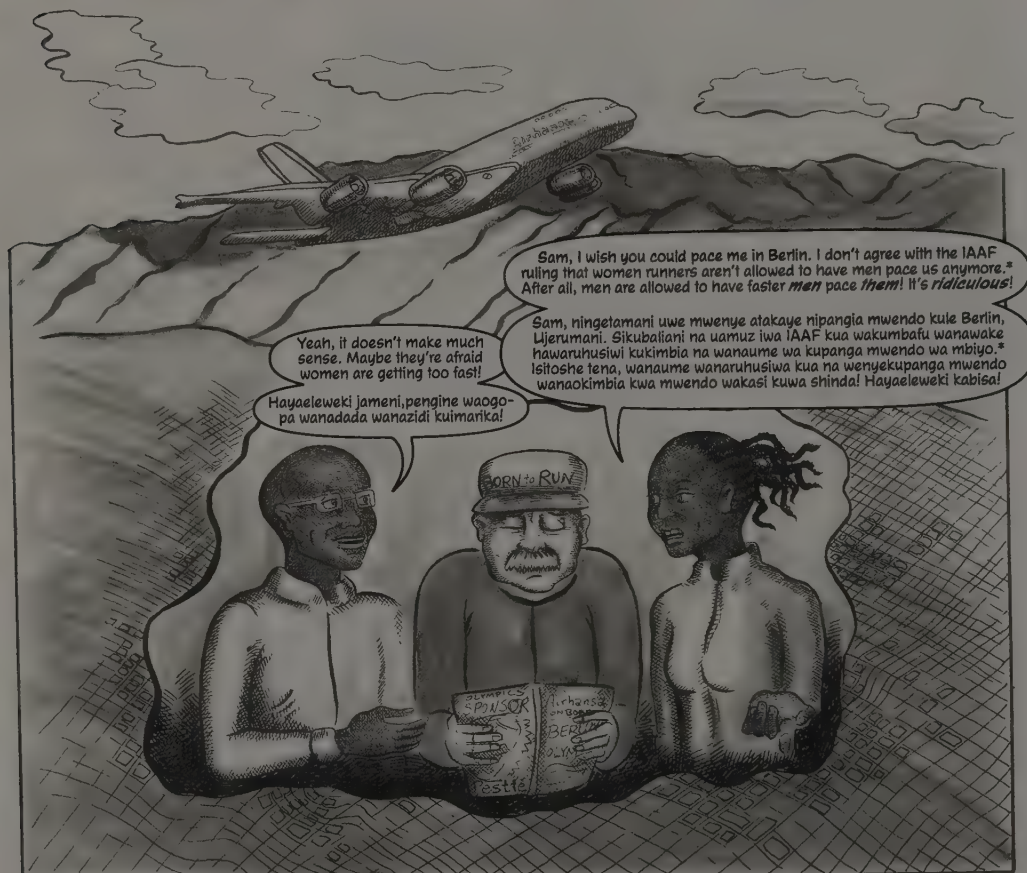
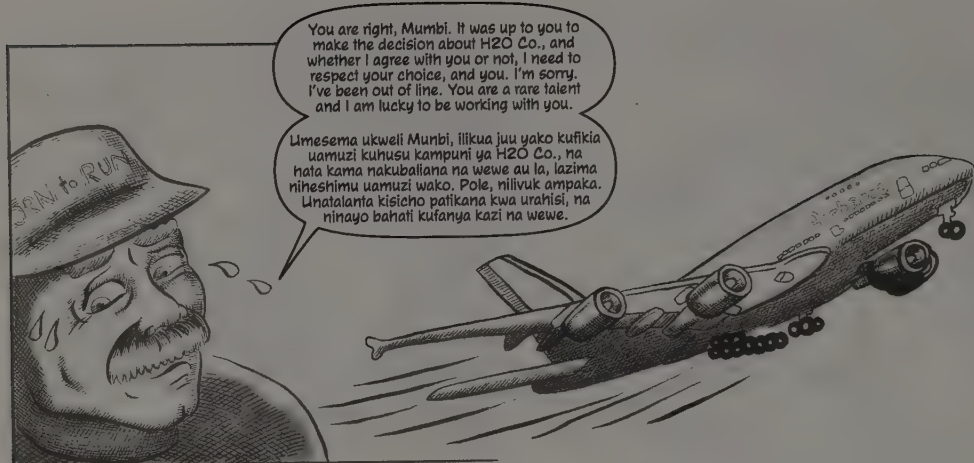
If you're only here because you might make some money from me, then you are DEAD WEIGHT.

AHAA... Nimeshanganzwa nimepata roho ya kumwambia hayo yote kwa sura lake!

WOW... I'm amazed that I had the guts to say that to him!

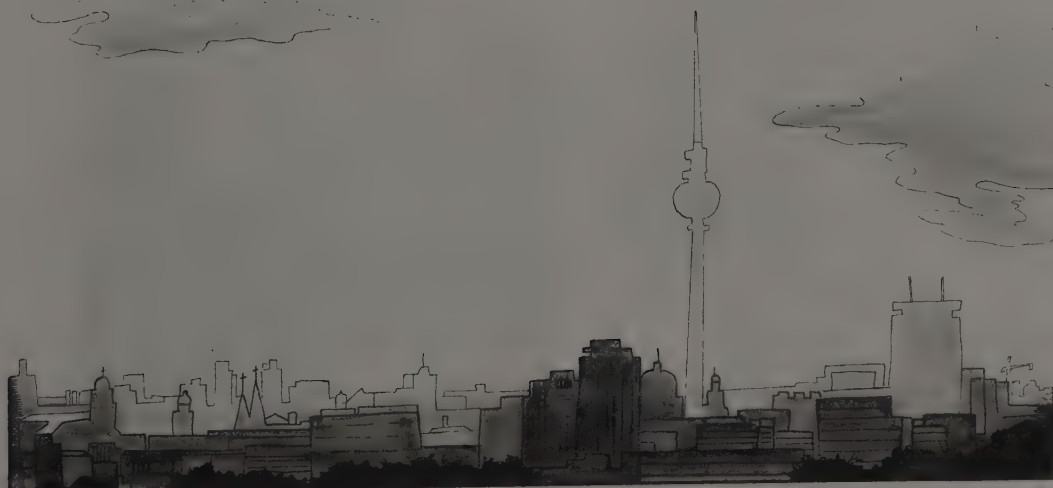
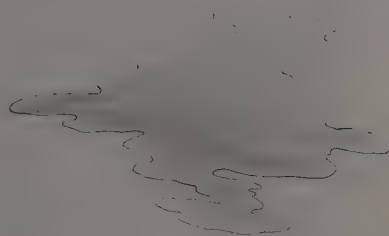
Kama uko hapa kwa vile unafikiria unaweza tengeneza pesa toka jasho langu basi una-ongeza nzito ya BURE.

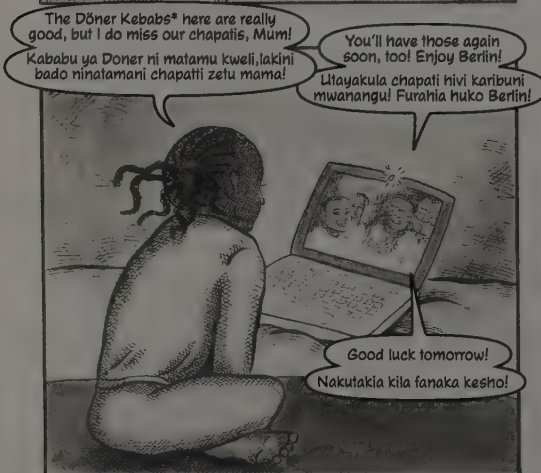




*In 2011, the International Association of Athletics Federations made a controversial decision that men would no longer be allowed to pace women at races.

*Katika mwaka wa 2011, jumla ya kimataifa ya wanafadha (IAAF) walimela uamuzi ulioo zaaitika kua wanaume hawataruhusiwa tena kuwa wakupangia wanaume mwendo kwenye mbiyo.

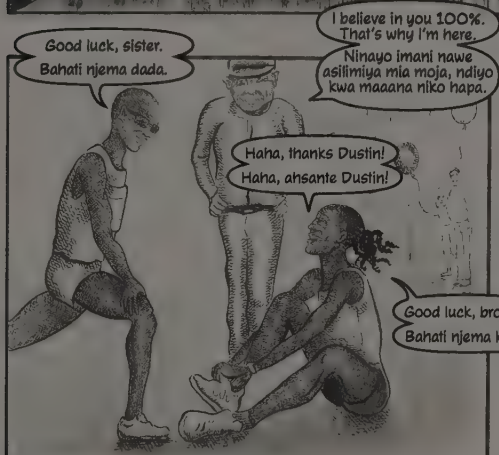




*Döner Kebabs are delicious Turkish sandwiches sold by many vendors around Berlin.

*Kababu ya Doner ni myama umeandaliwa katikati ya mikate kutoka nchi ya uturuki, na wenye viosk wengi wanavuaza huku Berlin.

The morning of the Berlin Marathon has arrived. Tens of thousands of runners gather at the start.
 Asubuhi ya siku ya Berlin marathon imefika. ma elfu ya wanariadha wanajikusanya wakiwa tayari kuanza.



The streets of Berlin are packed with spectators. For Mumbai, their voices are a distant buzz.
Barabara vya Berlin vimejaa na mashabiki. Kwake Mumbai, sauti yao yanamfikia kwa umbali.



She focuses on staying with the leaders as the pack of elite women racers thins out.

Nia yake ni kuhaakikisha anakimbiya na wale wanariadha wenye ujuzi vile tayari wanaanza kijitenganisha.

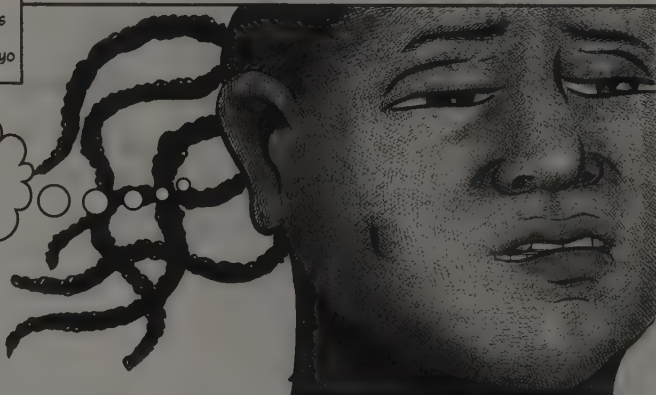


Mumbai hears the breaths and footfalls of another runner close behind her. She is distracted for a moment. In her mind, she begins to chant Esiher's name to the rhythm of her own even footsteps.

Mumbai anaskia vile mwanariadha mwenzake anavyo pumua na vile miguu yanavyo shika lami.

TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP

Es-ther
Es-ther
Es-ther
Es-ther



But moments later, a runner manages to pass her.

Lakini dakika chache baadaye, mwanariadha moja yuampita Mumbai.



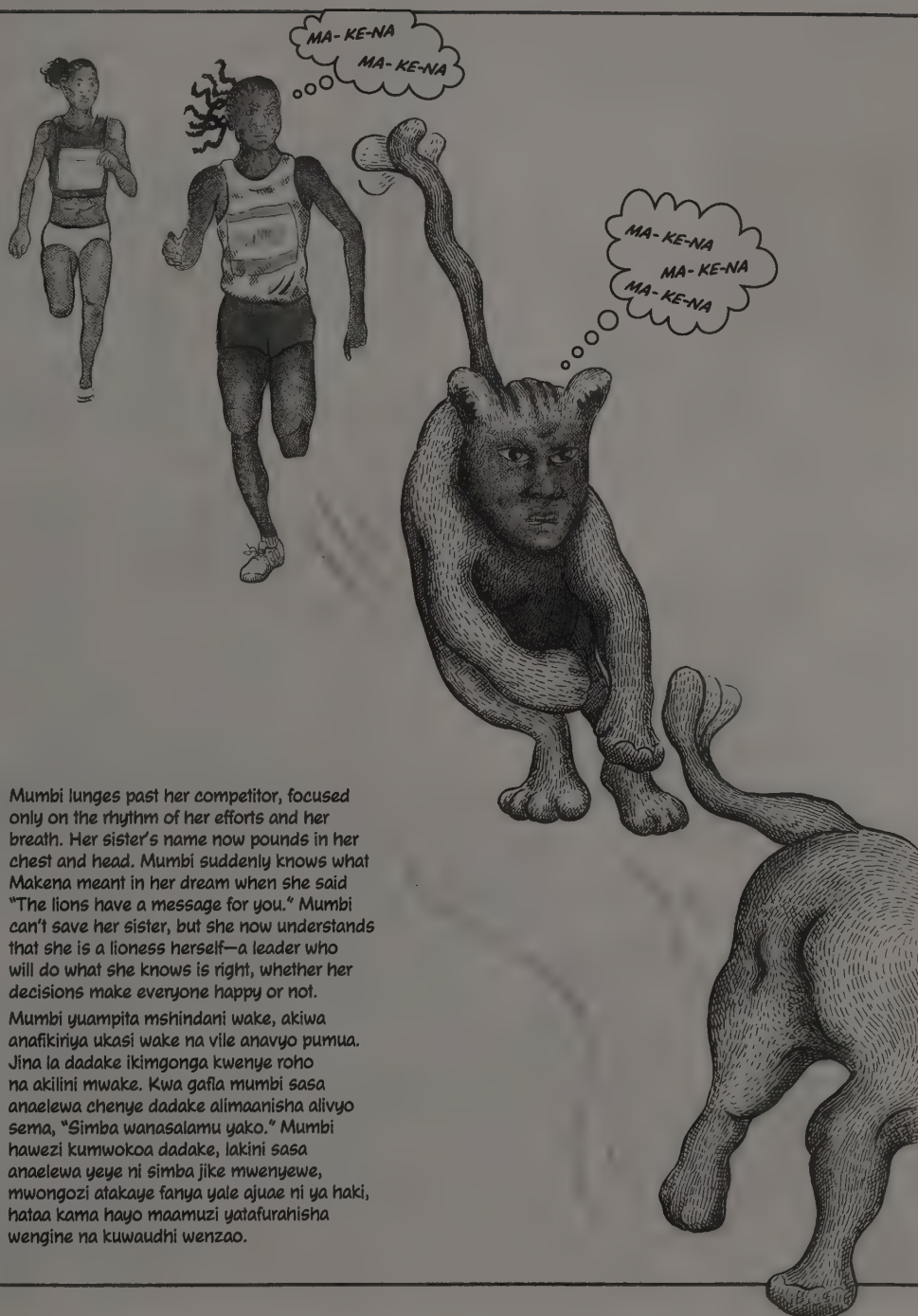
Mumbai sees the H2O Co. logo on the other woman's race bib and feels a surge of fury!

Mumbai yuaona alama ya kampuni ya H2O Co. ikiwa imeandikwa kwenye vazi la kukimbia la huyo mwanariadha na haapo ndiyo hasira yake yazidi!

Oh no you don't,
FACE OF H2O Co.!

La hasha, siyo
SURA LA H2O!



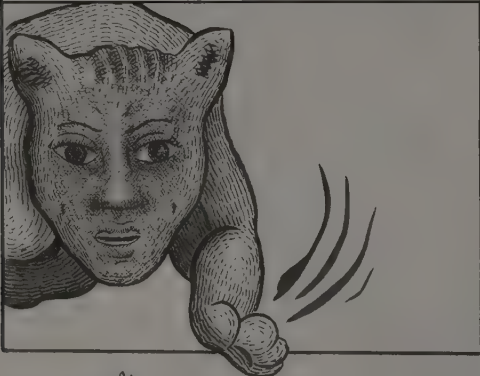


Mumbi lunges past her competitor, focused only on the rhythm of her efforts and her breath. Her sister's name now pounds in her chest and head. Mumbi suddenly knows what Makena meant in her dream when she said "The lions have a message for you." Mumbi can't save her sister, but she now understands that she is a lioness herself—a leader who will do what she knows is right, whether her decisions make everyone happy or not.

Mumbi yuampita mshindani wake, akiwa anafikiriya ukasi wake na vile anavyo pumua. Jina la dadake ikimgonga kwenye roho na akilini mwake. Kwa gafia mumbi sasa anaelewa chenye dadake alimaanisha alivyo sema, "Simba wanasalamu yako." Mumbi hawezi kumwokoza dadake, lakini sasa anaelewa yeye ni simba jike mwenyewe, mwongozi atakaye fanya yale ajua ni ya haki, hataa kama hayo maamuzi yatafurahisha wengine na kuwaudhi wenzao.

Mumbi sees nothing but her goal as she charges towards the finish line. All uncertainty and sadness have left her in this timeless moment of fearless motion.

Mumbi haoni mengine yote kuliko lengo lake akikaribia laini ya kumaliza yale yote aliyokua akishuku na kutokuaa na uhaakika yote yapotea anavyo pata nguvu bila uoga.



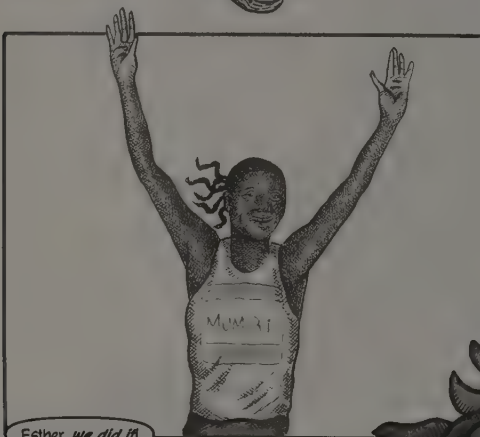
But it is Mumbi's human form, sweating and nearly past the point of total exhaustion, that crosses the finish line—in first place among the women.

Lakini mumbi ni mwanadamu, huku akitoa jasho na akikaribia ujovu kisicho na kipimo.



Sam, who placed third overall, and Dustin, who is beside himself with amazement, embrace her with tears of joy.

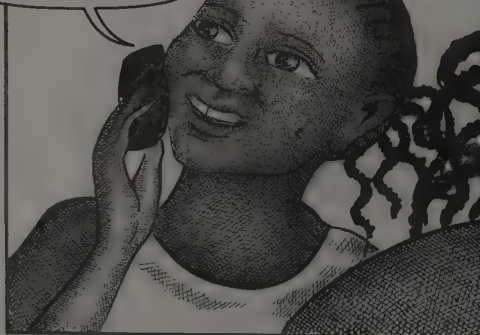
Sam, mwenye sasa ni nambari tatu kwa jumla, na Dustin, mwenye ameshikwa na mshangao, amkumbatia kwa raha na machozi.



Esther, we did it!
Esther, tumefanikiwa!

Study hard and aim *high*, because *anything* is possible!

Soma kwa bidii na lenga juu, kwa vile yote yawezekana!



O WOW WOW
WOW WOW...

I always knew
you could do it!
Nilitjua utaweza, si-
kushuku hata kidogo!!



Afterword

Esther Korir with Norah Sirma

I am an avid fan of *The F Word Project*: I love the humor that is brought out by the characters about serious topics. I was recently glued to one of the comics written by Maureen Burdock. “Mumbi & the Long Run” has really captured my imagination and I am sure it will capture millions of other people around the world. It is a very good tool for teaching and for use by facilitators in the Alternative Rites of Passage programs.

“Mumbi & the Long Run” is about eliminating the practice of female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) and early marriage in an increasingly globalized world like Kenya. Having been raised here, I know it is a big part of our culture and FGM/C has been practiced traditionally in our African culture in most of our communities. This practice is highly valued as it is believed to give girls and women dignity, respect and mainly enable them to get husbands and thus, a sense of belonging to the community. As a teaching tool “Mumbi & the Long Run” highlights the impacts of FGM/C positively and negatively, with an important emphasis on the benefits of alternative rites of passage (ARP).

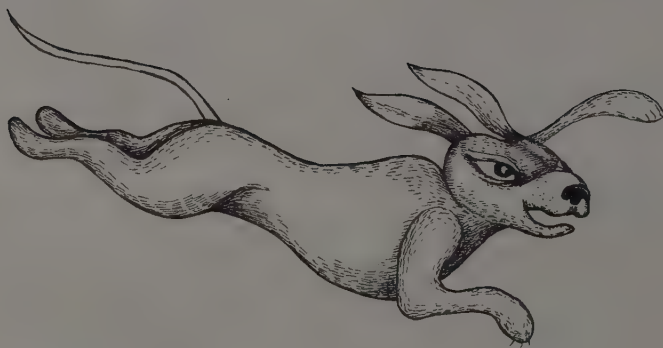
I have been facilitating trainings on Alternative Rites of Passage for a while in some of the communities in Kenya and one big thing I have learned is that to change our lives, we must be prepared to confront our fears and worries, and to embrace courage. Thankfully, “Mumbi & the Long Run” emphasizes the alternative rite of passage, which embraces a positive message, since it is against cutting. Change is a huge challenge in most of our cultures. Thus courage is very important for the girls and women in our communities to develop during the Alternative Rites of Passage trainings. Courage gives wings to girls and women to set them free to fly like they have never been able to fly.

Mumbi in the long run broke her own record and became part of a world-record-breaking event that will probably be unmatched for many years to come. By going against the odds and thus embracing Alternative Rites of Passage, this shows that you can put actions and attitude into one word: Courage.

Embracing Alternative Rites of Passage is the only solution to get girls and women to pursue their dreams, to make their own decisions, to know their rights and take charge of their own lives, thus being able to raise good families. “Mumbi & the Long Run” and other such stories can help facilitators of the ARP by desensitizing the formerly taboo topic, so that men and women can more comfortably discuss the issues and arrive at a clear and deep understanding of the need for such change.

In the spirit of Mumbi, girls and women go on—be courageous, step out of your comfort zone, take that action you are afraid of taking—it could be the key to your success.

Esther Korir and Norah Sirma are facilitators of the Alternative Rite of Passage with Friends of Londiani Kenya.





Halima's Story

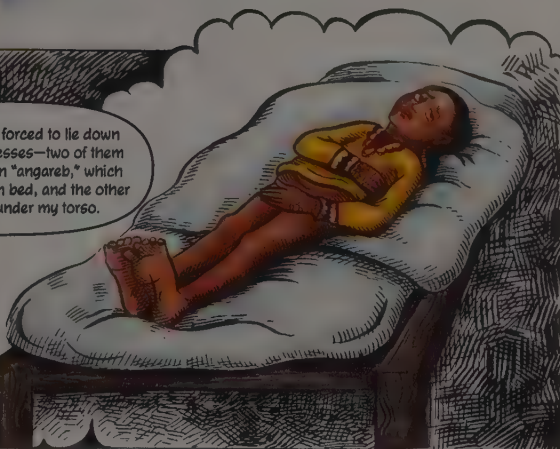
A Future without Female Genital Mutilation

Written by Halima Mohamed Abdel Rahman
Art by Maureen Burdock

Change is in process. It will not happen overnight, but with persistence, proper education, and consistency, it is within reach.



I remember being forced to lie down on three old mattresses—two of them stretched out on an "angareb," which is a popular wooden bed, and the other one was plied under my torso.



My midwife, Hajja Zeinab, sat on a low wooden stool. As she faced my naked body, our eyes met. I tried to escape her firm gaze, but she immediately addressed me with caution.

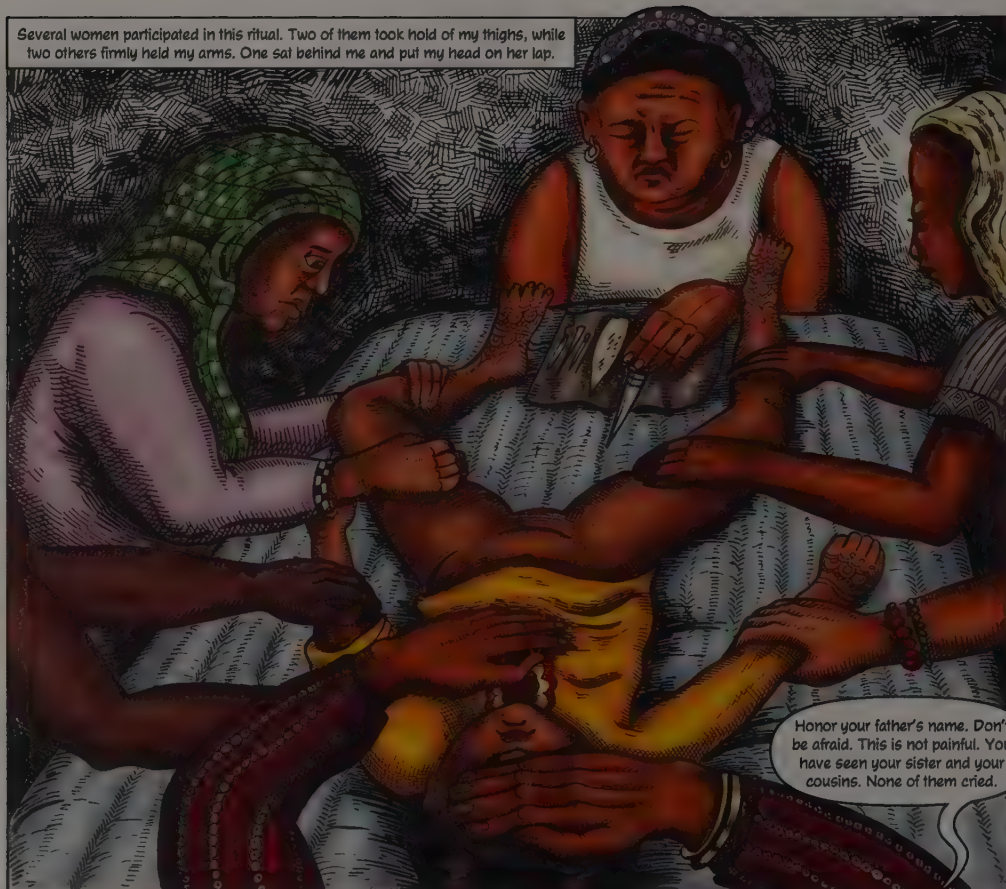


Now you are a woman. A real woman never cries. Now I will remove this dirt and you will become very clean and a real Muslim.

Later I learned that this belief reveals the depth and core of the atrocity. In Sudan the language plays a major part in making the excision desirable. It is called Tahoura or Tihara, which means purification, thus strongly linking it to religion. I believe this would be the situation for all Muslim communities practicing this ordeal.



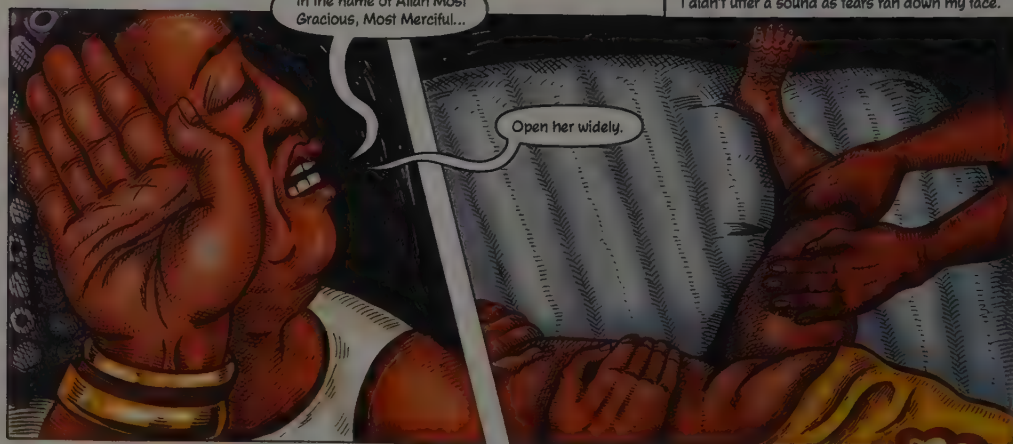
Several women participated in this ritual. Two of them took hold of my thighs, while two others firmly held my arms. One sat behind me and put my head on her lap.



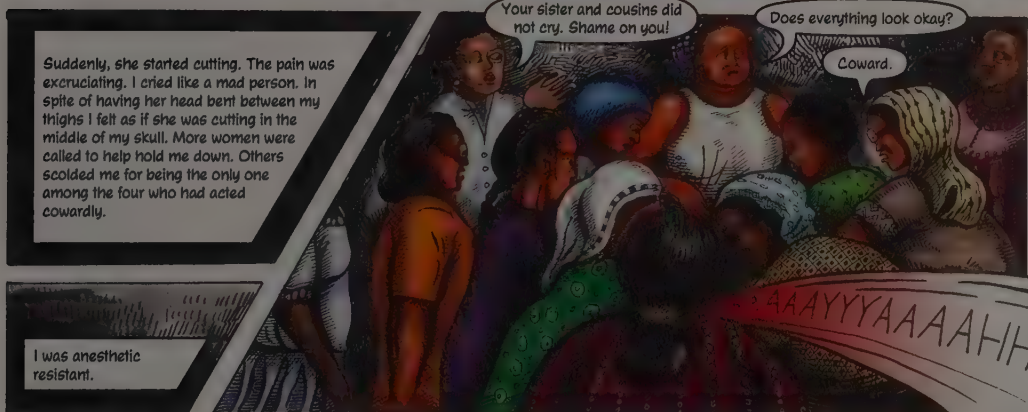
Honor your father's name. Don't be afraid. This is not painful. You have seen your sister and your cousins. None of them cried.

In the name of Allah Most Gracious, Most Merciful...

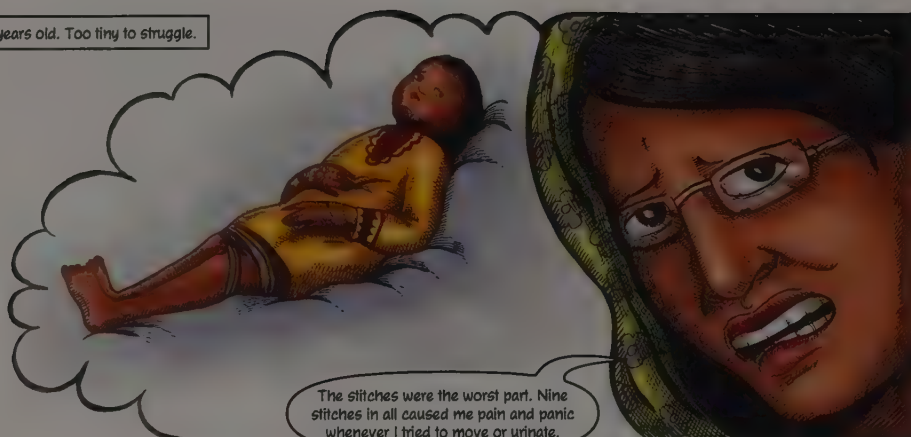
I didn't utter a sound as tears ran down my face.



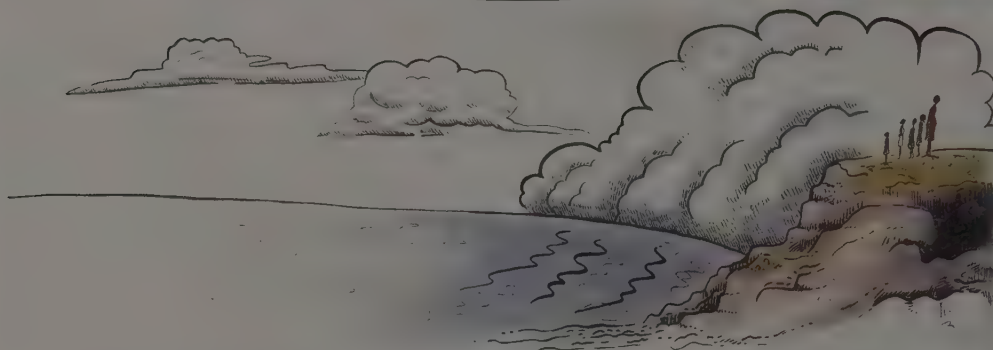
Open her widely.



I was only six years old. Too tiny to struggle.



The stitches were the worst part. Nine stitches in all caused me pain and panic whenever I tried to move or urinate.



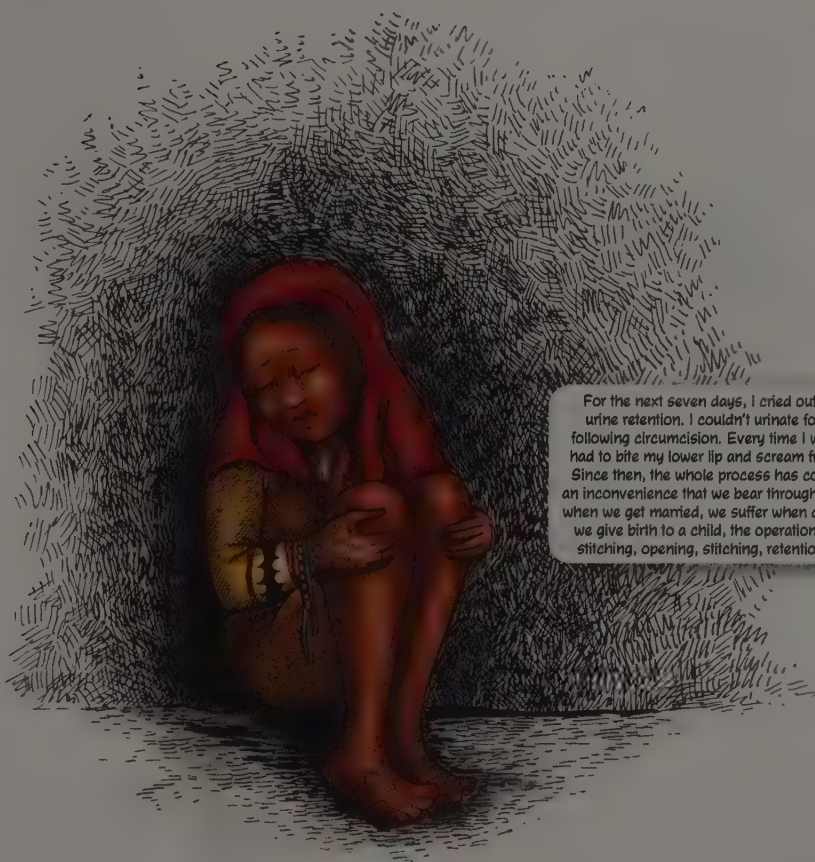
My sister, two cousins and I (all cut at the same time) were taken outside the excision room and shown the sea. A vision of the sea is believed to serve as a barrier against evil spirits. This evil could be caused by a sudden visit from a relative who might have attended a grievous incident—such as the burial of a dead person—and then surprised us with his presence without informing our mothers to take the necessary precautions. This was believed to cast an evil eye, causing damage to the wound and hindering fast healing.

After the operation, we circumcised girls were well-dressed and ornamented to receive relatives and neighbors who gave us some money.



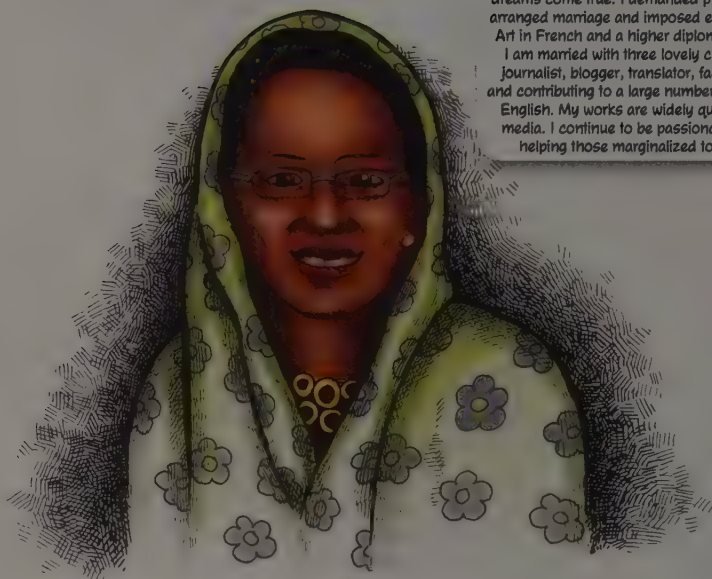
The celebration seemed like a contradiction. While my sister and cousins and I suffered, the others rejoiced.





For the next seven days, I cried out of pain and suffered urine retention. I couldn't urinate for the first three days following circumcision. Every time I wanted to pass water, I had to bite my lower lip and scream from between my teeth. Since then, the whole process has complicated my life. It is an inconvenience that we bear throughout our lives. We suffer when we get married, we suffer when delivering a child. When we give birth to a child, the operation is repeated: opening, stitching, opening, stitching, retention of urine and so on.

Getting the operation finished was the beginning of an initiation to all woes, instead of womanhood. Nobody told me that it would be a lifetime journey of suffering—during childhood, adolescence, marriage, and childbirth. Six thousand girls are daily cut in Khartoum State alone, more than two million yearly. Growing up, I discovered the dimensions of the problem; FGM is a global ordeal. About one hundred and forty million women are circumcised; the majority of them in Africa (in twenty-eight countries) and the Middle East.



After my FGM ordeal, I fought very hard in order to have my dreams come true. I demanded proper schooling and fought an early arranged marriage and imposed employment. I attained a Bachelor of Art in French and a higher diploma in translation, Arabic to English.

I am married with three lovely children. I now work as a freelance journalist, blogger, translator, facilitator, and activist, living abroad and contributing to a large number of media outlets in both Arabic and English. My works are widely quoted by the international and local media. I continue to be passionate about empowering women and helping those marginalized to voice the difficulties they face.

Something must be done to stop this horror!

That was the conviction which didn't leave my mind. In the mid-1980s I began my career of advocacy. I started by speaking up against FGM in my own hometown, merged my advocacy with my journalistic work in the 1990s (for both conventional and digital media), and became a facilitator in 2012.

I started first by targeting victims and executioners. I used to explain to potential victims the damage which would be inflicted on them if they were to accept temptations of having this dangerous operation done to them. I used illustrated books brought from Babiker Badri Scientific Association for Women's Studies. Later, two relatives, a doctor and a religious man, joined me. The three of us targeted all members of the families. Now the number of uncircumcised in my family exceeded 30, including my daughter. Some of these uncircumcised women have graduated from universities, married, and become mothers, thankful for having been spared this horror. Some have also joined in advocacy against FGM.



The image of some of my relatives' sufferings are still vivid in my mind, and nourish my advocacy: Salwa's husband rejected her because she had fistula following a hard late labor. Rugaya's newborn had brain damage that kept him crippled for life.

Three relatives lost their lives during labor.

Two more relatives were divorced because of their reduced sexuality. "How can I live with a cold woman whose vagina is like a leaked irrigation pipe?" asked a man who divorced one of my relatives when asked about reasons for separation.

FGM was responsible for these women's tragedies.

McFARLAND GRAPHIC NOVELS

Yellow Rose of Texas: The Myth of Emily Morgan.

Written by Douglas Brode; Illustrated by Joe Orsak. 2010

Horrors: Great Stories of Fear and Their Creators.

Written by Rocky Wood; Illustrated by Glenn Chadbourne. 2010

Hutch: Baseball's Fred Hutchinson and a Legacy of Courage.

Written by Mike Shannon; Illustrated by Scott Hannig. 2011

*Hit by Pitch: Ray Chapman, Carl Mays and
the Fatal Fastball.* Molly Lawless. 2012

*Werewolves of Wisconsin and Other American Myths,
Monsters and Ghosts.* Andy Fish. 2012

Witch Hunts: A Graphic History of the Burning Times.

Written by Rocky Wood and Lisa Morton;

Illustrated by Greg Chapman. 2012

Hardball Legends and Journeymen and Short-Timers: 333

Illustrated Baseball Biographies. Ronnie Joyner. 2012

The Accidental Candidate: The Rise and Fall of Alvin Greene.

Written by Corey Hutchins and David Axe; Art by Blue Delliquanti. 2012

Virgin Vampires: Or, Once Upon a Time in Transylvania.

Written by Douglas Brode; Illustrated by Joe Orsak. 2012

Great Zombies in History. Edited by Joe Sergi. 2013

Bushers: Ballplayers Drawn from Left Field.

Ed Attanasio and Eric Gouldsberry. 2013

Bonnie and Clyde—The Beginning. Gary Jeffrey. 2014

Dracula's Army: The Dead Travel Fast. Andy Fish. 2014

This compendium of fables in visual form features women negotiating different types of gender-based violence and inequity in various cultures worldwide. Five graphic narratives expose such issues as femicide, child molestation and female genital mutilation without defining the affected women and girls by their unfortunate circumstances.

Highlighting the power of intelligence, humor and decency and the willingness of people to work together to effect social change, these fables—each presented bilingually in English and the protagonist's native language of Spanish, German, Arabic or Swahili—transcend boundaries of gender, race, language and geography without ignoring differences. Subtle ink washes, brilliant colors and detailed crosshatching distinguish the acclaimed magical realist artwork through which the stories unfold.

An award-winning artist, **MAUREEN BURDOCK** lives in the San Francisco Bay Area.

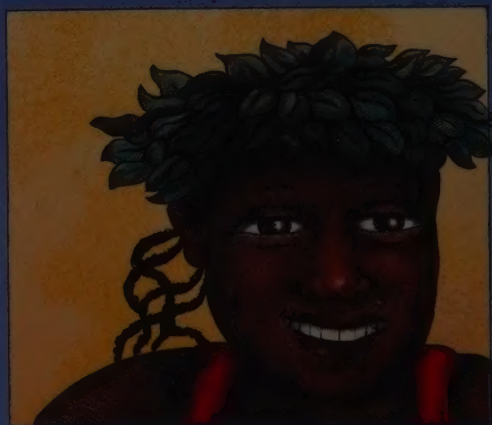
Cover illustrations by Maureen Burdock



McFarland
GRAPHIC NOVEL



9 780786 474233



P9-DRR-933